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Her Highness the Lady Ann.

P. Sely Pinxit. A. Blooteling fecit et excudit. 1678.

[Frontispiece

ANNE STUART

Queen of England

By

BEATRICE CURTIS BROWN

AUTHOR OF "ELIZABETH CHUDLEIGH"

GEOFFREY BLES

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TO
IRIS BARRY

INTRODUCTION

THE story of Anne Stuart is not the history of her age. The glory and activities of her time were incomprehensible to her, while as an historical pivot she does not exist. Her sister represented all that she could have represented in the 1688 revolution. As a mother of kings, Anne might have been a factor in English history. Childless she did not divert the stream.

So I have felt justified in ignoring the tremendous political movements of her time and devoting myself entirely to a narrative of Anne's personal history ; to my reading of the personal turmoils, hopes, and fears which made up the life of this woman.

Regarded from above, as it were, Anne's life (besides being unimportant) only consists of a series of incidents, in which her behaviour appears so inconsistent as to be negligible. It is difficult to be interested in behaviour which, like a lunatic's, shows no *direction* ; in actions which do not appear to spring from a recognisable motive, and which have, therefore, no continuity. Had she been of real importance to history, an Elizabeth or a Catherine of Russia, her personality would have been interpreted by now. But she was of no importance, so she has never been given humanity. She has only been exemplified in a series of attitudes, as a string of virtues and void of virtues (vices she is never allowed), with no more character than the subject of an epitaph. Queen Anne, in fact, is dead.

Yet though she died two hundred years ago, she is scarcely more dead to us than thousands of her kind living at this moment. Queen Annes are always dead. To the more articulate, to those who from education or some spiritual instinct are able to unchain themselves

from emotion and achieve detachment, the stupor of the "dull" is incomprehensible, when it is not contemptible. The cleft between the dead and the living is not deeper than the cleft between the lively and the stupid.

Had a witty woman plotted against her father, then intrigued with him—grappled herself to a friend and then turned against her—the world would have seized upon this phenomenon of inconsistency and, perhaps sympathetically, laid bare the machinery that set such a personality in motion. Yet this machinery may be identical for the witty and the stupid.

I have tried here to render comprehensible some of the Inarticulates of this world by setting down my own reading of that Queen of Inarticulates—Anne Stuart. By "inarticulate" I mean, of course, not merely inadequate in speech, but also in action, in personal relations, in manner, an inarticulate person being one who has never learned to express himself worthily on any plane of living.

Although I have founded my conception of Anne entirely on her recorded sayings, writings, and actions, I found it impossible to draw a fair picture of her unless her life were presented in a definite form, preferably narrative form, where every typical action would have its right place in the curve of the story. For this reason this life of Anne *is* presented as a story undisguisedly, and the gaps have been filled in from my own imagination: though I have never used imagination to establish an aspect of her character which I had not real reason to postulate from the historical evidence.

I have thus, admittedly, drawn an arbitrary portrait, but I believe it to be a truer portrait than any I could have drawn by simply stringing the facts of her life

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together and omitting the obvious conclusions to be drawn from those facts. The impression of Anne, as I have said, which one receives generally from history is that of a woman whose inanity amounts to mental deficiency. Agnes Strickland, who wrote the most detailed biography of the Queen—and whose research so much lightens the task of any later biographer—tried to go deeper than many into Anne's character. But she only dilated on the immediate motive for any of Anne's actions, and consequently her Anne is no more reasonable or, indeed, credible, than the "Good Queen Anne" of history.

There are, of course, far more records of Anne's activities and sayings after her accession than before. The personal details of her life before 1688 are extremely scarce. Yet this period seemed to me to be important and worth filling in if the rest of her life were to be comprehensible. So I have freely "decorated" the sparsely documented episodes of her girlhood, though the decorations (even to the topics of conversation) have been carefully drawn, founded as far as possible on historical data. The courtship of Mulgrave and the intervention of Sarah Churchill are barely mentioned in the records of her life; yet this incident must have been important to Anne, and I felt justified, from what I could learn of it and of her subsequent attitude to Mulgrave, in drawing a picture of the courtship which I hope will illuminate and not obscure her.

In general I might say that the conversations themselves are nearly all imaginary till 1688; those of the William and Mary period are nearly all historical, and all the conversations in that part of the book which deals with her reign are taken from existing records, except

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for a few words here and there. The quarrel with the Duchess of Marlborough is, of course, taken verbatim from the Duchess's "Conduct." All the letters transcribed are authentic.

It may be thought that I have gone out of my way, unreasonably, to invent or record unimportant personal details when I have omitted happenings which shook the whole of England. Yet the events which shook England often, so far as I can see, did not divert Anne an inch from her path, and their narration would, therefore, cast no light upon her. But a turn of the head and a hesitation in the speech, as we know from our contact with living people about us, may betray the whole soul.

OLD HEADINGTON,
1928.

“ Je m'étais . . . servi d'un télescope pour apercevoir des choses très petites en effet, mais parce qu'elles étaient situées à une grande distance. . . . ”

MARCEL PROUST.

PART ONE

PART I

I

PROLOGUE : RICHMOND, 1675

ANNE walked apart from the others as they strolled along the riverside. Mary, with Mary Apsley, Barbara and Elizabeth Villiers, was ahead, and the four were chattering and tittering together. The wind had caught Mary's lace handkerchief and blown it into the water, and there had been screams and laughter as Elizabeth made as if to wade in after it. Anne, who believed everything that was said, called out to her, shocked at the daring, and this had only made the four laugh more merrily. Anne was hurt by this and slackened her pace, so that she was left some way in the rear. She felt sure they were discussing her, for Mary was telling some story and their bursts of laughter rose like the regular refrain of a song. Mary's stories were mostly of Anne's stupidity ; of how she had once insisted that a tree near by was a man till she nearly had run into it ; of how she drove their French tutor, M. de Laine, to despair. Peeping at them secretly, once or twice, Anne saw Mary Apsley look round at her, even make as if to drop back from the others, but Mary always caught her arm and cried, " Husband, you *shall* stay with me." Mary does not like to share her friends, and she does not care for Anne to have friends either, thought her sister fiercely. This afternoon had been full of quarrels simply because Mary Apsley had chosen to play with Anne all that morning. Mary and Mary Apsley pretended to be husband and wife—an idea they had from having acted in a play together.

Anne's small fingers clenched in her palm. Her only refuge was in her sullenness, and she crept into the comfort of it as she would into a bed on a cold night. Waves of loneliness rolled over her ; she grew hot with anger. They tittered, the foolish girls, and caressed each other with their "dearest Aspasia," "beloved Semandras." She could not pronounce these endearments ; she blushed when she tried to force herself to take part in the passionate pretences at which they all played. Anne could see no sense in it. She did not feel like an Aspasia or any of those women in Mr. Dryden's plays. She did not love those girls as much as all that. Perhaps she might have loved them more if only Mary did not always interfere, just as she was trying to form the words which opened intimacy. "They are foolish, foolish," said Anne to herself, and had she been able to cry easily, as Mary cried for instance, she would have been glad then to feel tears on her cheeks. But she never had relief in that way. Only sullen anger rose inside her till she felt she could scream.

There was a sound of grown-up voices. She looked round and saw her father and her uncle, the King, coming towards them from the palace. One or two other gentlemen were with them, and behind strolled her stepmother with her ladies. The Duke of York was talking earnestly to the King, who was only half listening, giving most of his attention to the daisies which he stabbed with his stick as he passed along.

The girls hurried up to the King and made their obeisances. Mary went over to her father and took his hand. He held it tightly and turned to his brother. He let nothing interfere when he had business to discuss, but he never turned Mary away ; he would stroke her

hair as he talked to a minister and smile at her as he gave orders to a servant.

But the King was tired of talking business. "Very well, Jamie, worship as you will, but you will have to let your Mary redeem you," and he smiled at her. James frowned. He suspected that his brother was verging on blasphemy and he hated loose talk before his daughters. He always hoped that the winds from London carried no flavour of Whitehall to Richmond, that garden of youth and innocence. He murmured a protest, but the King laughed.

Anne watched the play—it was familiar to her. She knew quite well what they were discussing. This Lord Danby—of whom she heard people speaking as respectfully as, a few months ago, they had spoken of Shaftesbury—had plans for Mary. She was to be confirmed as a Protestant; Bishop Compton, their tutor, had been very solemn about the matter; and she was, perhaps, to be married to the Prince of Orange. Mary had said she did not like the Prince, but Anne was quite satisfied with the scheme. When Mary was married and went away, they would write to each other and she would go to Holland for visits. Mary could be a great lady in some other place and Anne would not need to play at silly games any more, but have friends of her own, to treat as she liked.

Nevertheless, Anne was slightly disquieted by what she heard in these conversations between her father and the King. Ever since her father had ceased to attend the royal chapel and the country knew—as even she, secluded at Richmond and only nine years old, knew—that the heir to the throne had turned Papist, Anne had felt vaguely frightened when the murmur of State affairs reached her ears. She had the same

feeling as when, years ago, her little brother Edgar had tried to snatch away from her the black velvet rabbit with which they all played. She had clutched it, speechless and furious. Then her mother had come, soothed her and told her she could keep the toy. Both Edgar and her mother had been dead a long time now.

Anne felt sometimes (horrified at herself) that she hated her father. She hated his fumbling, thick speech, she despised him for not being able to hold his own with the King when his brother mocked at him. She hated him for declaring himself a Papist and putting them all into danger. Why should anyone wish to be a Papist? Dr. Compton had taught her what Papists were, what they had done in England years ago, what they were doing in France and Spain. She thought perhaps he had been converted to please his new wife, the pretty dark girl he had brought over from Italy the year before. Anne regarded her stepmother with indifference and waited with mild curiosity for the birth of another brother, who would displace her, as she had often been displaced from the succession before. She and Mary often discussed the question of succession in private, playing the game of "who comes next" with primroses in the deer park. They would pick his Majesty their uncle, then their father, then (when there had been one) their brother, till only Mary and Anne were left. Anne had no resentment for these little brothers who appeared and died at intervals. Girls were not often queens. But she was very much frightened of being cheated of her position. She was frightened of crowds of men with steel, of mobs armed with scythes and sticks; she was angry, too, with sentries who did not give her the salute to which she was entitled and with strangers who did not give her her full title. On January 30th

she was dressed in black and the whole palace fasted and attended service in the chapel, hung as though for a funeral. That was the anniversary of her grandfather's death. Anne dreaded it for many days each year.

"Will you dance with me at your sister's marriage, my lady?" asked the King, smiling at her. "Or am I too old? Perhaps my Lord Monmouth would suit better. That would please your father."

The King laughed again and the Duke scowled. There was trouble between him and her cousin Monmouth. But Anne did not like to be laughed at either. She said sulkily, "I do not know, your Majesty," and would have drawn away, but her uncle took her hand and asked pleadingly to be allowed to go too.

Anne was appeased. They walked back through the palace, across the courtyard and out into the park. The sentries stood to attention as they passed and the King nodded, but Anne acknowledged the salute with a grave bow. Anne had promised to show the King a great oak they had named after him, but her progress was slow because Charles would stop every few feet to examine a plant or attempt to kick a stone into a clump of ferns. Once they nearly stepped on a frog. Charles was delighted with it and made Anne stoop and inspect its eyes with him.

"Froggy would a-wooing go,
Heigh-ho, said Rowley,"

chirped Anne suddenly. Her uncle gave a huge roar of laughter. "So you know that, little maid. Sing me some more." Anne stood up very straight, with head raised, and sang the song through as she had learnt it from Mrs. Buss, her nurse. "My dear," said the King when she had done, "your voice is sweet and

clear, and if your father does not know it—and it certainly does not resemble his—then I do. And Mrs. Betterton whom I saw last night, and there is no finer actress in England, shall teach you how to speak. Next Christmas you shall act a play for me.”

“Can I? Act a part?” Anne was mad with happiness. “Can I have a part as well as Mary?”

The King laughed and patted her head; then his attention was distracted by a fine oak. “Now, that tree is the very twin to the one which—years before you were born, my dear——”

Anne looked up at her uncle in dismay. Was he going to tell her the story of how he hid in a tree *again*? It was a curious thing about him, she thought, he never seemed to remember having heard his own words before. She did not want to hear that story again. Out of the corner of her eye she saw a young girl cross the courtyard of the palace. “Let us go back, Sire,” she said, pulling at the King’s hand. “The others are looking for you.”

She started back as quickly as she could, the King sauntering after her. In the courtyard they met Mary and the Duke, so Anne was able to slip away into the palace, where she caught up a young girl, half a dozen years her senior, fair-haired, highly coloured, vivacious, who was just slipping into one of the rooms.

“Mistress Jennings,—I looked for you among my stepmother’s ladies—I thought you had not come.”

Sarah Jennings laughed happily. Anne drew a deep breath; she was safe now, secure from her sister’s teasing or from disquieting echoes of State affairs.

“My guitar is mended, Mistress Jennings. Come, I’ll sing to you.”

II

ANNE accepted circumstances as they came ; she did not like adventure and she never tried to colour the unhurrying days by speculating on possibilities. Yet even she, during the years of her girlhood, after her sister's marriage, drew a quick breath sometimes to see how turmoil and the winds of dissension blew round her house and yet never so much as fluttered her own tapestries.

For her immediate family was ever, during these years, harassed, anxious or apprehensive.

In the Richmond days there had been murmurings of the trouble to come. Her father had had to look on helplessly while the King ostentatiously used his children to show the nation how good were his intentions. Was a germ of Popery suspected in the royal house ? He procured that anti-Papist Henry Compton for their tutor. Was the Duke of York a religious traitor ? Let the children live safely away from him at Richmond with the worthy Lady Villiers. Was there something strange about our relations with Louis XIV, the man the nation yearned in vain to fight ? Let Mary be married to her cousin of Orange to show the goodwill we have to the enemies of France.

The girls were still heirs to the throne, so these measures were a fine gesture to the nation while they did no injury to the King. Hurt and submissive, the Duke of York yielded his children to the royal will. Charles was courteous and apologetic—his brother must know the penalties for turning Papist. There was no privacy, no intimacy that the State could not tear in pieces when it came to dealing with Romanism. James knew this—and besides, he was a busy man.

And the girls were young ; he realised from his own experiences that true conviction in these matters did not come but with years of discretion.

But while in her childhood in Richmond there had only been a murmur of danger, by the time Anne grew to girlhood and was settled in her own apartments at St. James's the murmur had grown to a mighty roar. Anne preferred to ignore it—it seemed safer.

But she knew, whether she would or no, that there was trouble about. Even over the basset table they talked of Titus Oates and the Coleman scandal. Her pretty little stepmother came into her rooms sometimes, threw herself into a chair and wept. She told Anne between sobs that they had left her no one. Her priest had been taken, her old servants who had come from Italy, and now Coleman her secretary, simply because they were Catholics. These were cruel laws against strangers who loved England—and loved her as much as that foxy-faced Shaftesbury, the low-born dissenter who was trying to oust the rightful heir in favour of that bastard, Monmouth. Anne would stand stiffly by during these scenes, her face still and a faint disgust in her eyes, and presently the Duchess would shake her head, wipe her eyes with a lace handkerchief and change the subject. Then Anne would grow pleasant again, and the two would practise a measure on the guitar together or go off on a shopping expedition.

Meanwhile her father's face was growing more deeply lined ; he had heavy furrows now running from the corners of his nose to his mouth ; he was becoming more and more sadly affectionate. Anne only felt that he was to blame. She dreaded seeing trouble in the faces about her. She inwardly turned aside when she met Lord Danby hurrying along the passages of the

palace, his golden wig gleaming in the candlelight, his brow heavy—though he always smiled at her. And she hated Lord Shaftesbury, supercilious and triumphant, though she did not sympathise with her stepmother. But most of all she hated Papists.

One day during her fourteenth year there was a strange bustle in the palace and the ladies sitting down to basset were full of talk. "Bishops to see his Highness," gasped Barbara Villiers (now Mrs. Berkeley). Sarah Churchill (Mistress Jennings had married Colonel Churchill) looked angrily at the girl. "It is no laughing matter, child." Anne glanced apprehensively at her friend. Sarah was not easily frightened, but the Churchills followed the Duke of York, shared the same fortune and misfortune. After the game, Anne took Sarah aside. Had something arisen in regard to this Exclusion Bill which Shaftesbury was scheming, to exclude the Duke and all his family from the throne, as a penalty for his turning Papist? But Sarah shook her head. That trouble was still in the making. This concerned her father's immediate future—his very tomorrow. "Banishment?" asked Anne, her voice trembling a little.

Sarah nodded. "That or return to the faith—he can save us yet."

But Anne knew he would not save them. "They will keep you here, you and the child," said Sarah. The Duchess's child, Isabella, was only three.

"But you will have to go," said Anne. She turned away listlessly to the window. The sentries were changing guard down in the court. They clashed their swords, and their boots clamping on the stones made a pleasant reassuring noise. The sergeant growled words of command, and as the men taking over came sharply to

attention the plumes in their wide hats shook in unison. An old woman who did laundry passed across the court carrying a bundle. She glanced up at the window, smiled and bobbed as she saw the princess standing there. Anne nodded her head. It pleased her to be reminded that the people loved her, and she was their Protestant, their English princess. She at least had picked up no claptrap religions or expensive lovers from foreign parts.

But Mrs. Churchill was going away. The wise companion, the most vivacious playfellow, was leaving her.

Dignified and reproachful, Anne's father and step-mother and their servants the Churchills made ready to set out for Brussels. At Whitehall, three days later, Anne bade them farewell, holding her small stepsister tightly by the hand. She was surprised when the time came by a choking emotion. Involuntarily she was thinking, "I am Anne Stuart; these are Stuarts, my people: Royal Stuarts." The name suddenly became overwhelmingly significant to her—not as a royal signature, but as the linking name of an ill-starred family, of a series of relationships always bound by strange, cruel affection. They were a beleaguered family, woefully tragic, self-tormenting, bound together in a love which they resented.

The King and his brother were taking leave of each other. James might have been the banisher, Charles the banished. This was not a scene in which Charles's social gifts could help him. Even now he was urging them not to hurry away—the weathercock had swung three days with a contrary wind. The Duchess of York smiled bitterly. "Are you grieved, sir?" she asked the King. "You are sending us into exile, and of course we must go, since you ordained it."

Anne looked up at her uncle. His great dark eyes showed pain ; a silence fell upon the little group. Then from outside came the sound of a horse shaking its bit. The Duke and Duchess bowed, withdrew. Through the window came the sound of coaches clattering away, up Whitehall, past Charing Cross and away to the East. As the sound died away Anne broke into sobs and cried like a small lost child.

The cold winds of adversity did not, however, touch the Duke's daughter. The crowds still cheered when she drove through the streets, ministers still bowed low when they came to pay their respects to the sister of a future queen. For there was no son for the Duchess of York yet, and no son for Mary in Holland. Anne was safe still ; the suffering daughter of a misguided father. It was even safe for her to join him in Brussels when finally, in answer to her father's pleas, Charles gave permission for the two girls to cross the Channel.

Anne enjoyed herself in the Netherlands. She had come to Holland a few years before with her stepmother, under a transparent incognito, to visit Mary, but they had only remained for a few days. Now she had time to explore the country and make friends. She and Sarah and her stepmother made expeditions together in the fields and woods around Brussels, disguising themselves sometimes as peasants and going into fits of giggles when the country people could not understand their English. They visited Mary too, now turning into a sad, moping woman, mourning the harshness and infidelities of her grim, silent husband. But Mary would not confide her troubles in Anne, and grew proud and remote when Anne hinted her dislike of "that monster Caliban," as she secretly called her brother-in-law to Mrs. Churchill.

Mary did not like Sarah Churchill. That became obvious during their visit to The Hague. She told Anne that her friend was a scheming little woman, of low birth, good enough, of course, for a maid of honour but hardly suitable for a friend. She herself had learnt, she said bitterly, not to trust one's servants, even if they had been childhood playmates. Anne knew she was referring to Elizabeth Villiers, now a Dutchman's wife, who had begun her liaison with silent William almost before the end of his honeymoon. Anne did not know how to offer sympathy; she shook her head and simply replied, "I am sure, sister, that Mistress Churchill is not as you think."

With her father and his wife, Anne was very dignified, in her consciousness of being the one member of the household that England still held in favour. She was rather aggressively Protestant, withdrew proudly to her own prayers, morning and evening, and remained aloof from the family devotions as noticeably as possible. She was not, however, even invited to join with the family in their religious exercises, for which mercy, she told Sarah, gravely shaking her head, she was devoutly thankful.

She had not been in Brussels long before there came news that the King was seriously ill. James was sent for; he was to come secretly and bring as few people with him as possible. He set off at once with only two friends and a barber, and soon after returned in high spirits. He had more friends at Court than he had suspected, he told them; the King had recovered and better times were coming for them all. Sarah pursed her lips when Anne ran to discuss the news.

"Everyone has unsuspected friends before they know which way the cat will jump," Sarah said. "When

York is here, Monmouth is nowhere, but my Lords Halifax and Sunderland and the rest—do you think they are nowhere too? A little more intrigue from our friend Shaftesbury, and Monmouth will find foothold again, and then see where to find Lord Sunderland and his friends.”

“But Lord Sunderland himself sent for my father,” insisted Anne.

“Yes, and my Lord Sunderland is very much interested by the Exclusion Bill, the off-with-you-all Bill, father, stepmother, Orange and Anne,” retorted Sarah, mimicking her. “There’s no rest yet.”

During the next year Anne saw that this was true. Though she stayed in London, her father was suffered no nearer the capital than Edinburgh. And though on a tide of reaction he was called back to London later, his barge cheered by crowds along the banks of the Thames; though Shaftesbury was frowned upon, and the royal family applauded; though Anne for a while breathed the sigh of relief she hardly realised she had cause to feel—still, in a few months again the tide had turned; James wearily journeyed back to Scotland—this time in polite banishment as the King’s representative.

Anne knew that for herself there was safety. Yet she felt an imperceptible uneasiness during these tumultuous times. Such a legend of tragedy lay about her family that any ill-toward event set her ears pricking, as it were, alert for intrusions; for the footsteps of accusers who would search out some crime, for the sound of marching of purposeful men who would deprive her of power, station, security—everything by which she lived. She longed for her father to be out of exile, at peace with the King and the people, for then she could relax, forget her

dread. Yet she scarcely knew she feared. She smothered her dread, believing with all her might that it did not exist. Only when the clamour of the Anti-Papists rose high, when processions passed through the city, howling at effigies of the Pope, pelting the scarecrow Jesuits ; when she fancied she heard the Duke of York's name growled by the crowds, she hated her father for bringing them into trouble when ease and comfort were so cheaply bought.

Anti-Popery was raging high now. There were fresh rumours of Popish plots every day. Outraged citizens armed themselves with pocket-sized cudgels to protect themselves from the Romish assassins lurking in unlikely places. There were risings in the country, where Shaftesbury told the gentry how he feared to sleep at night for fear of the Jesuits ; processions in the lanes where handsome Monmouth—much to his father's irritation—rode on a white horse and showed the peasantry what a fine figure of a king he would make. But Anne, ostentatiously unheeding of all the commotion, played basset, giggled, gossiped, said her Protestant prayers, hunted at Windsor or shopped with her friend Mary Apsley who had lately married Sir Benjamin Bathurst. And still the Londoners cheered their little Protestant Princess when she went out in her coach or chair to perform her small activities.

Towards the end of the year 1680, however, when she was fifteen, there were new murmurings which interested her somewhat more than political rumours. It was time for her to think of marriage, it seemed. Lady Clarendon, her Uncle Clarendon's wife, tall, austere, learned, began frequently to open conversations on royal responsibilities, the qualities of a good wife, the honour of England. Anne did not attend closely to

these homilies. She felt like a very little girl in the presence of her mother's brother and his wife. Though they were unfailingly respectful to her, she knew the respect was paid to her rank alone. They seemed ever to bear a burden of silent disapproval. They turned away from their obeisances so readily to discuss a Greek translation or point of theology with her chaplain—or indeed with anyone rather more intellectually equipped than herself. Anne was frightened of her uncle and respected him, but she merely resented his wife's attitude.

She was interested in this question of a husband, however. She knew she would not be affianced to a French prince. This might be convenient for the King, but the country would never countenance such an alliance with the hated Louis. She thought there would be many advantages in marriage. She could be far more grand; could have her own apartments, on a larger scale than those allowed to a junior, unmarried princess; a larger allowance; could choose her own ladies. Her heart leapt: she could perhaps have Sarah Churchill in her household—if Sarah would come.

While she was still debating these points, she heard that Prince George of Hanover, her cousin, was to pay a visit to the English court, and immediately after his arrival Anne received a message from the King that she was to give her cousin an audience the following day.

Anne's ladies, girls scarcely older than herself, were very much excited. Listening to their chatter she began to realise gropingly that marriage would mean, apart from other considerations, a man of her own. She would have a grown-up prince to pay her respect, even to admire or care for her. She had met gallant young men at balls, had been intimate in a sisterly way with a

dozen or so half-royal cousins. But she had had no flirtations. She was too silent, too undemonstrative ; she could never toss her pleasant brown head with the air of her sister Mary, and her slow smile was not inviting or deliciously secretive like the smiles of the Villiers girls. Besides, she knew of her father's escapades and looked on affairs of the heart with a faint disgust. Scarcely consciously she championed her dead mother, who, after winning and holding her lover against extraordinary obstacles, had to give place to one lady after another, to ladies of wit or beauty or vivacity, according to the Duke's passing taste.

But here was a legal, honourable husband to be considered. She was to pass to acknowledged womanhood and Prince George was to make his bow to her, to lead her forth to the Whitehall balcony to receive the cheers of the crowds. And she would love him perhaps. Romanticising, Anne fell asleep.

As the clatter and jangle of coaches sounded outside, the voices of the pages announced the King, doors were thrown open and the tramping of feet sounded on the stairs up to her apartments, Anne settled herself a little nervously in her chair. She was dressed in rose-coloured silk, she held her best fan, and Lady Clarendon hastily arranged a misplaced lock of hair in a more becoming position before taking her place behind her. The pages and ladies-in-waiting around the room were obviously excited, but Anne's face showed no agitation.

The great doors were flung open ; the King and the Prince were announced. Anne fixed her eyes on George and felt a slight stillness of disappointment. Her serene cousin was a short, stoutish young man with a full red face and a plebeian countenance.

Anne held out her hand, which Prince George kissed; the two regarded each other rather blankly and the King laughed. "Give him your cheek, Niece; he is your cousin." Anne offered herself doubtfully and the young man with a happier air approached and pecked her on both cheeks. She did not know whether she was pleased or not by this attention. She had hoped to impress him as a great lady; she thought he might have tried to kiss the hem of her skirt, when she could, according to court etiquette, have gently pulled it away, so that a polite little scuffle ensued; but this cousinly attention seemed to ensure an intimacy which might be both fitting and decorous. She decided that she liked Cousin George of Hanover—though she wished he were taller.

She did not see very much of him for the next few days, but that was to be expected. Her sister had scarcely seen William till the ceremony took place; with the prospective husband the King had always many matters arising from the betrothal to discuss before the lady herself was approached. Anne waited serenely for whatever should next arise.

One evening a few days later she stood at the window looking out over the snow which covered the grass and loaded down the trees of St. James's Park. The sky was clear and serene, but as she gazed out a meteor, flashing bright like a sword, fell across the heavens. Anne drew her breath; the sight was so beautiful. Suddenly for a moment she felt all-powerful; queen of England, mother of a line of kings; benign, beloved; held up by a secret joy. The meteor fell—disappeared. She cried out and Mistress Berkeley hurried to her. Anne turned to her friend, suddenly empty-hearted, sad and discouraged.

Mistress Berkeley wished to gossip. Anne hardly listened at first ; then she realised that Barbara was saying something disquieting about Cousin George.

“ . . . Even at the levee they heard him speaking so,” Barbara was insisting in her soft, insinuating tones, “there in the King’s chamber, to one of his gentlemen. ‘I wouldn’t marry her,’ he said. ‘I mayn’t choose my wife—then truly they shall choose me a wife, not a clumsy schoolgirl, fresh from kiss-in-the-ring, gawkish and silent, with eyes like a frog . . .’”

Barbara’s voice died away. She began to make deprecating noises. “I only repeat what they say . . .” But Anne walked away from her. She swallowed. Now when she could have cried, as she had often longed to do, she would not. Barbara followed her, still speaking. Anne said nothing ; when the meteor fell it left a void in her heart that now was filled with bitterness—but no one should see. Her eyes—those treacherous eyes which failed her so early, which had been the despair of physicians, which had marred the beauty she almost attained ; that silence which fell on her when she was faced with strangers or friends—he had pricked at every wound. But no one should know she cared. She *preferred* silence then ; she assumed her clumsiness by choice.

For one moment she had seen a meteor like a sword in the sky, and it had fallen. Now there was stillness everywhere.

But Mistress Berkeley wrote to her sister Elizabeth, Prince William’s mistress, at The Hague, and told her that the Prince’s commands had been carried out. There was no danger of a match now between Hanover and England, and William need have no fears, for the

moment, of a greater claim than his own to the succession in England.

After a few weeks, George was recalled to his own country for a marriage with Princess Dorothea of Zell ; an excellent match, suggested, he understood, by his distant relative the Prince of Orange.

III

NOT very long after George's departure, fortunately, the Duke of York sent for his daughter, and in the distractions of the Edinburgh Court Anne almost forgot her mortification. Her father showed himself at his best in Scotland : dignified, assured and kindly, and according to the respect shown him by his subjects Anne's own affection rose and fell. Here in the north as the sovereign's representative, James did not seem to bear the stigma of exile, and though her stepmother shivered at the north winds, Anne enjoyed herself and her position immensely. There were balls and masques (in which she rather distinguished herself) and fireworks ; the Scots were gallant and courtly. She found herself in the pleasant position of being the only young princess of blood, instead of merely a small member of a large royal family as in London.

Still when the tide turned once again and her family returned, loudly cheered, to their old home at St. James's, Anne found a particular satisfaction in being back. She so loved everything with which she was familiar : people, ritual, and places. Her heart was tranquil when she saw that which she had often seen before. Among familiar sights she felt a queen. She walked through the archways and across the dispersed little courtyards of St. James's inarticulately approving of them, commending them for having remained in their proper places. She felt affable and gracious. She talked to her step-mother—mourning still for the child Isabella who had died the previous spring—about the maids of honour ; to her father about the health of his dog Mumper, who had suffered from rheumatism ever since his wetting when the Duke had suffered shipwreck on his voyage

to Scotland. She paced beside Colonel Churchill and gravely discussed military uniforms with him, and he, without the suspicion of a twinkle in his fine grey eyes, would respectfully answer her questions on the comparative merits of the rapier and the musketoon.

To Mrs. Churchill she talked all the time. They did everything together now, hunted at Windsor, stood side by side with anxiously clasped hands as the Duke's horses passed the royal stand at Newmarket, shopped in the city for trinkets—and especially for those flower-scented gloves which Anne loved, being a little proud of her slim white hands ; walked in the park, giggling over the love-lorn couples around Rosamond's pond, or made visits to Paradise in Hatton Garden, where Anne was delighted by the animals with movable limbs so skilfully cut out of painted board ; there was truly very little between them and real animals, as she remarked often to Sarah.

Sarah was the person who held life together. Anne, at seventeen as at nine, received each day's, each year's occurrences, the significant glance and the lesser assassination, unquestioningly. She had a few attitudes ready to bring forward to meet certain situations—these attitudes being the natural response of her education at the hands of the beef-eating soldier bishop, that robust anti-Papist. It never occurred to Anne to analyse or refurbish her attitudes, and the old catchwords she had learnt almost from the cradle ("The Church is in danger" ; "The Divine Right of Kings") were simple, necessary, familiar facts to her, like the archways of St. James's. They could be produced at any time with reference to almost any emergency. Beneath them lay certain emotions, but these she did not understand and only unwillingly bore with, when they surged up at some

warning bell from the outside world. Chief among them was fear ; fear dominated her, for she lived in a dangerous world. She was a Stuart, a member of the besieged family. There was always danger for a Stuart. This she felt rather than knew. From month to month the measure of her safety rose and fell. Was it to be Shaftesbury and the Exclusionists, or Halifax and his scheme for an impotent sovereign ? was it to be "our little Protestant princess" or persecution and banishment at the hands of handsome King Monmouth ? Or was it to be civil war between all parties with a princess in the Tower or fleeing shivering over the water ? When catastrophes had come she had always been safe, but she never could lift the dread from her heart, for no one knew how long Uncle Charles could keep the Whigs and their revolutionary heresies at bay.

Yet beneath the grave Protestant disciple of Bishop Compton, beneath the secret fears and the open vanity there lurked a little girl. Anne had slid from childhood almost to womanhood without ever growing up. In the very centre of tumult she had been strangely well provided for ; she had never had to grapple with circumstances or turn her mind to speculation. The old watch-words served as ensigns, the winds of fear and vanity filled the sails of this ship.

But Sarah Churchill stood at the wheel. Sarah, her cheeks flushed, eyes kindled, her straw-coloured head ever slightly on one side, interpreted the day's load of events, pointed out the rocks in the course, sounded the depths, called up the winds, and then, the ship going steadily if not fleetly, took over the steering wheel. Sarah was quick, Sarah understood things. Sarah, fresh from a talk with her knowledgeable husband, could drop a word about a Sunderland, shrug a shoulder over a

Halifax, which would completely undermine the effect on Anne of these lords' ingratiating manners.

They might be Whigs after all, and to Anne Whigs were the polluters of the sacred, the profaners of the temple, the men who dared to touch with rude hands the sovereign and the Holy Church. They were to her—only in a different way—as much an object of loathing as the Papists.

Sarah, bright, ears pricked for news, energetic, vital, stood between her and the perils outside. Sarah alone took trouble to explain and interpret, to allay doubts, to rouse her response. Sarah, Anne knew, was an adult. Sarah's intuition and good sense stood sentry at the door of Anne's mind. While Anne groped and smiled bewilderedly, Sarah explained everything, so simply that Anne could understand. She explained matters in the terms which alone were comprehensible to the Princess: "The Whigs, who would deny the King his divine prerogative . . ." "The Church, which must be preserved . . ." In a world of foolish and inexplicable people Sarah alone seemed to be sane. She alone to Anne was a protector and a guide.

Sarah had a determined little manner which Anne respected enormously. Anne pondered with great approval over Sarah's sensible shrill pronouncements and accepted naturally with her an association which she would never have permitted with anyone else. Indeed there was nothing to do but permit it. Sarah took a course of action for granted; one hardly had time to question it. And then she had always done what she did for the greater glory and honour of her little friend. But she would not flatter her. If there was one thing she refused to do, she said trimly, it was to flatter anyone, and if Anne expected *that*, she, Sarah, would have

to beg pardon and withdraw—and she had seemed almost to be about to gather up and go as she said it. But Anne, fascinated, terrified, inarticulate, had said no, no, she did not expect it, and Sarah looked appeased. They seemed almost to have been on the brink of a quarrel.

It was summer, 1682. Anne was happy now ; George was nearly forgotten, and the trees were growing green in St. James's Park. Anne, walking from St. James's to Whitehall with Sarah one day in early summer, felt a peculiar contentment, an approval of her surroundings.

Over the sharp green grass and between the avenues strolled citizens and aristocrats ; they were moving patches of colour, red, saffron, black, silver, and blue. A couple of young men sauntered to the mulberry gardens to eat cakes together ; a group of stalwarts stripped off their coats for a game of pall mall ; school-boys ran races with their dogs, and lovers were stealing down to where Rosamond's pond gleamed between the trees. Sarah chatted all the time. "There's the Mazarine, Highness—where'll she be making her way to now, I wonder ? Look, she's with Monsieur Evrémonde, Highness, such devotion—they say he takes her a pot of cream every single day. They do say, too, that the Carwell insulted her in the Queen's circle last night. They're both as bad as each other. And there's the boy she brought over who sings so divinely—what an angel's face."

They passed Madame Gwynne's house, and looked up out of the corners of their eyes to see whether she were displaying herself on the balcony—which she was. Unfortunately she perfectly observed them eyeing her, and waved to them, thus putting them into the em-

barrassing position of having either to pretend that they had not looked up, or having to acknowledge her greeting. They bowed distantly. They had decided to spend the morning in the privy garden of Whitehall, for it was hot and it would be refreshing to watch the fountain. They entered one of the little alleys of the western precincts of the palace and started to cross the road to the gardens. The palace was a small town in itself, with its own breweries, bakeries, laundries, stables, and lodgings for servants and guests, and the townsfolk swarmed through it, gossiped at the side doors or watched lazily for a member of the royal family or some famous favourite to cross the courtyards or show himself at a balcony.

As the two girls crossed the road they heard the cheerful noise of laughter and oaths coming from the door into the tennis pavilion on their right. King Charles had finished a game of tennis and immediately a group of gentlemen joined them on the road talking uproariously together. The King was with them, looking peculiarly charming in his white silk shirt sleeves and dark velvet breeches. He waved his hand to Anne and shouted he would see her later, then passed over to the entrance by the Banqueting Hall, followed by a gentleman who attempted with some difficulty to help him into his coat as he strode alone. A second later another gentleman came out from the court, also without a coat. He was very hot and discomforted. Anne recognised him as Sheffield, Lord Mulgrave, one of the King's gentlemen of the bedchamber, a youngish man who had a respectable record as a soldier and a poet. He was a friend of her father's, but she had never known him except by sight. This morning, however, out of idle curiosity or from spring-time friendliness, she slackened her pace to watch him as he followed the

King's group across the road to the main buildings. He looked kind, and so very uncomfortable. There was something almost feminine about his face, except for his nose, which was arched and large, his features were delicate and well shaped. There was humour in the lines of his mouth and chin, a kind of idle shrewdness in his eyes with their long fair lashes. He was not much taller than herself. He did not seem aware of her as he crossed the road. He mopped his neck and forehead, shook his handkerchief and dropped it. He stopped, picked it up, examined it ruefully, continued mopping, then caught Anne's attentive eye and smiled. He smiled brilliantly. His smile leagued her with him in some delightful secret—about the handkerchief perhaps. Anne was enchanted, and felt herself enchanting. She wanted to laugh, but did actually only curve her lips in a smile. She began to hurry on ; she had lagged far behind Sarah. Lord Mulgrave made her a stately, an almost extravagant bow, and then, as he too disappeared into the other gateway, actually turned and waved his arm boisterously. Anne gasped. Then looking around fearfully she began to laugh. She leant against the stone archway laughing and laughing.

When Anne reached Sarah waiting in the privy garden, she asked her casually about Mulgrave. Sarah, as usual, knew all about him. He had done well at Tangiers some years before and was a friend of the Duke of York, who had used his influence with the King to get the young man command of a troop of horse. He had been involved in the quarrel between Monmouth and the Duke, and the Duke had been pleased with the part he had played in it. He was a friend of the poets, too ; Mr. Dryden, for instance, owed him a great deal and they even collaborated in verses. But

he was not altogether popular—he had too sharp a tongue.

“You’ve seen him often,” said Sarah. “You must know the man.”

“Oh yes, I have seen him,” said Anne. But now she wanted to see him again.

She did see him again and very soon. The next evening she went over to the palace to pay her respects to the Queen, who had been ailing. When she came to Catherine’s dark-blue damasked apartments, the room was fairly crowded. The Queen lay on a couch, the others stood round in the circle, making polite conversation and trying to respond to Catherine’s rather studiedly bright remarks. The King had been, rather more overtly than usual, paying court to the Mazarine, and at such periodical crises the Queen’s attempts to emulate the crystalline witty gossip of Whitehall became more strained and more pathetic. She seemed to grow more unattractive as she grew desperate; her teeth projected further, her eyeballs became more prominent. Her honest heart misgave her so frequently in the midst of her laboured wit.

Her face lit up as Anne came in. She called her to the couch, kissed her, turned to the Duke and Duchess, who were standing near and congratulated them on the Princess’s beauty. James beamed with delight; he had as much pride in Anne now as he had had in her sister, years before. Anne herself felt comfortably pleased by the compliment and moved among the courtiers with more assurance than usual. Some of the gentlemen about the Court were inclined to make her nervous. They said things with queer little smiles which made her feel that she must be missing their meaning. Later the Queen called her again. “Master

Rocke, who was to have sung to-night, has an infection of the throat. Would you play us an air on the guitar, my child ? ”

Anne reddened but curtsied. She played well, she knew—and the King was not there. He made her a little nervous—he never attended when she played, and she feared he found her music tedious, though he always clapped heartily at the end.

She drew up a stool near to the Queen’s couch and took up a guitar that someone brought forward. She plucked at the strings doubtfully, and began an Italian air that her stepmother had taught her.

It was then that Mulgrave saw her as he slipped into the room ; seated on a crimson brocaded stool, her head slightly bent over the guitar, her brown carefully curled hair lying over one shoulder, her dark-blue silk gown falling in large folds to the ground all around the stool. She looked her most beautiful thus ; her small fingers picking at the strings of the guitar which was tied with falling narrow ribbons, her face intent but composed, her body still and curved. Mulgrave crept up behind the ring of men and women and watched her playing. When Anne looked up, the song ended, she saw him and reddened. The courtiers clapped. Mulgrave went up and made his duty to the Queen. “ I have recently composed a lyric, your Majesty—perhaps it would entertain you ? ” The Queen gave a pleased nod. Mulgrave came up to Anne, smiled gravely and took the guitar. Then he sat down on the stool and began his song.

From all uneasy passions free,
Revenge, ambition, jealousy,
Contented I had been too blest,
If love and you had let me rest.

Yet that dull life I now despise
Safe from your eyes,
I fear'd no griefs, but then I found no joys.

Amidst a thousand kind desires,
Which beauty moves, and love inspires ;
Such pangs I feel of tender fear,
No heart so soft as mine can bear.
Yet I'll defy the worst of harms
Such as your charms,
'Tis worth a life to die within your arms.

During the last verse he looked full at Anne, but after the song was over, to her disappointment he did not come up to her, but went over to speak to one of the ladies-in-waiting. Anne, rather to her own surprise, found herself talking loudly and merrily to Lord Dorset, a gentleman with whom she felt perfectly safe conversationally, for he never answered her remarks with monosyllables, though he was known as the wittiest and most gallant of courtiers. Anne had known him all her life, he had fought under her father at sea against the Dutch, and the Duke himself, when Anne was a little girl, had taught her the song he so often hummed, "To all you ladies now on land, we men at sea indite," which Lord Dorset had actually composed on board ship on the eve of battle.

Anne poked at Dorset's sword hilt, asked him questions about it, made remarks on the needs of swords for gentlemen and the romantic causes of duels. The courtiers around exchanged smiles, but Dorset replied in the same vein, speaking gently to her. Then suddenly she became aware of Mulgrave standing beside her. He kissed her hand. Somehow they found themselves at the window looking out over the Thames. Small boats were rocking on the river, moored for the night.

Across the river behind the dark trees the full moon was rising.

"It is warm outside by the water, Highness," said Mulgrave abstractedly, tapping the window pane with his finger-nails.

So Anne and Mulgrave slipped from the Queen's reception room through the many corridors of the palace, down small staircases and out through a little door near the King's private slip, where there was a small terrace overlooking the river. And there they strolled up and down or stopped and rested their elbows on the stone parapet while they listened to the water slapping against the stone, or watched a white swan sailing steadily and quickly back to its nest over the shining black water.

Mulgrave talked and beat off the moths and played with Anne's fan ; and Anne listened, excited, frightened, and extraordinarily happy.

The next month or so Anne was strangely serene. Life became more interesting ; trees and houses, the soldiers' plumes, vessels passing up the river, odd stanzas of poetry, seemed now to her—though she was not conscious of the change—to have become more significant and colourful. She was too much a child of the court not to recognise that she and Mulgrave were involved in courtship ; yet this new self-confidence, this serene revitalisation which had descended on her since the evening at Whitehall, prevented her from regarding the relationship impersonally. She did not speculate or romanticise about it. She was not even infatuated with Mulgrave, though he fascinated her and piqued her curiosity. She enormously enjoyed being in his company ; he made amusing remarks, he pointed out a hundred things she had never seen, decked another hundred with grace or humour or significance. She



John Sheffield Earl of Mulgrave Chamberlain of his Ma^{ty} George II.
 Gentleman of his Bedchamber, Colonel of the Buffs, Regiment of Foot, of Hull
 and Lieutenant for the East Riding of Yorkshire, Vice Admiral of Yorkshire, Northum-
 berland and Bishoprick of Durham, Knight of the most Noble Order of the Garter, and
 one of his Ma^{ty} most Hon^{ble} Privy Council, created Marquis of Normandy 1723, Viscount of
 Peterborough 1724, Marquis of Buckingham June 1725. Died Feb. 24. 1741. Aged 60 years.

could never catch up with him, but she smiled at what he said and told him all she had seen and done since last they met. And sometimes when she described some evening spent at Lady Apsley's or a visit to Hampton Court or an accident in the Park, rather stupidly as she thought, because she had said so quickly what had come into her head, he would smile or take her hand and kiss her fingers, almost as a brother might, and say, "Our Princess knows better than they think," which Anne could not at all understand, but she was pleased, knowing that she had pleased him. He told her many things too, about fighting the Moors, about the Great Fire the year she was born, and about the less scandalous of the Court or some of the easier experiments of the Royal Society.

He would ride over to St. James's and they would sit in her apartment talking together ; sometimes he was of the party when they all went to Windsor to hunt. Anne loved hunting and was fearless on a horse. Or sometimes they rode together through the Great Park and he would tell her about the trees there, which timber was right for ships and which for tables. But she liked best to sing for him, for then she could hold her own and she knew he would not laugh, even kindly—as he so often did—at her voice, which was low and rather lovely.

She began to enjoy being alone ; Mulgrave talked so much, gave her so much to think about, and she always had to think slowly about things which puzzled her, repeating a difficult phrase over and over to herself. She began to forget her fear, that hitherto ever-present fear, of unknown peril, of being found out or of being put in the wrong. More and more, she dismissed her ladies-in-waiting to sit alone, more and more often declined to play basset, and hardly noticed that they looked angrily

at each other when Mulgrave was announced at her apartment or as he sprang forward to hold her stirrup when she mounted for one of those care-free rides they took together, when the ladies would be bidden to fall behind.

Mulgrave made love to her a little, but she was too familiar with the manners of Whitehall to feel particularly flattered by this. She herself was undemonstrative. She enjoyed his attentions, but chiefly responded to his personality, his affection, his wit, his presumption. She loved his way of bursting into song, of composing extempore verses for her, and she loved what seemed to her to be his omniscience.

They did not meet often at Court: though when Anne went to Whitehall he was always there, they did not speak much to each other. It never occurred to Anne in her strange trance of tranquillity to wonder whether her affection was as obvious and negligible to others as any other of the hundred intrigues of which she gossiped herself.

Mulgrave used to play his guitar in the Queen's chamber, and whenever Anne was there with the others would sing some lyric he had lately composed and sung to her when they were last alone together. Anne loved these secret signals, nor did she notice that some of the courtiers glanced at each other when the song was ended.

When they could not meet, he sent her letters, and these, so much more explicitly affectionate than his words to her, stirred her deeply, almost painfully. She was puzzled by her own feelings and never dared to write back, half realising that she would be both inarticulate and too self-revealing on paper. Yet she longed to reveal herself, even to risk an answering withdrawal or contempt.

Then when their friendship was drawing more tense, more and more heavy with accumulated reservations, when it was drawing itself up for the downward sweep which would carry them off their ground of separate self-assurance, Anne received a letter from her friend, Mary Apsley. She had always been a little frightened of Mary, who was decorous and well-behaved. She was an intimate friend of her own sister, and years before, when they had played together as children, Anne had felt that the two Marys were leagued together to reproach her when she had behaved childishly. Yet in spite of this, Anne had a peculiar affection for her. She could not remember a time when Mary Apsley had not been her companion.

The letter was grave and sisterly ; it reproached her without preliminaries for exposing herself to the gossip of all the Courts in Europe ; for vulgar conduct with an insignificant lordling ; for intrigue and deceit ; for behaviour which stained the reputation of the royal family of Stuart, and it ended up by imploring her, before it was too late, to see where her path was leading and to resume the orderly and dignified life which she had led in such an exemplary fashion before this rake, this waster, had begun his designs on the crown of England.

The letter terrified Anne. The full implications of love and marriage with Mulgrave she had never faced. For once she had forgotten the crown of England, and now, she found, she did not care to remember it.

Sarah came into her apartment as she sat at the window, the letter in her hand ; she looked up rather impatiently ; Sarah was so omnipresent, so full of plans and schemes with which Anne lately did not at all wish to comply. Now she had a suggestion for a picnic the next day ; they were to go to Chelsea by boat and have their dinner

in the fields. Anne shook her head ; “ I ride with Lord Mulgrave to-morrow.”

Then suddenly Sarah changed. Her face grew red, she seemed to turn to fire. Anne, stiff, immobile, sat with her hands tightly clutching the arms of her chair while Sarah poured out resentment and jealousy and anger. She said that Anne had most evidently forgotten herself, forgotten her rank, her dignity, and her friends ; that it was impossible to do anything right now that his lordship had appeared, that there seemed to be only one person fit to judge of any matter in the world, and that she personally was surprised to know it ; that there was no time now for royal obligations or old friendships ; that doubtless one person whose advantage it certainly was to cultivate the good opinion of the Princess was very satisfied with himself. That she, Sarah, was not, and that she would not stoop to flattery but that of course others with high-placed ambitions might ; that certain people’s conduct was disgracing the whole of St. James’s and making the respectable maids of honour a prey to impudent rakes of the Court ; that the good times had gone and she quite saw that faithful friends must withdraw now and curtsy his lordship into his place, for some people had no mind of their own but were pulled here and there by any petty adventurer who chose to sing pretty songs about their curly hair.

The door banged. Anne, trembling a little, got to her feet, and went over to her writing-table. Slowly, for she wrote with difficulty always, she composed her first letter to Mulgrave. She asked him to come and take her away, because she did love him very much and she did not know what to do and Mrs. Apsley and Mrs. Churchill had said very unkind things to her. Please to come soon.

Anne gave the letter to a page and told him to deliver it immediately to Lord Mulgrave at Whitehall. The boy promised to hurry, and Anne watched him from her window running across the court and out into the Park where she could no longer see him.

There, when he stopped for a breath, Mrs. Churchill came towards him from a seat under a tree. She asked him if he carried a letter to Whitehall. The boy told her yes, from the Princess to Lord Mulgrave. "Give it to me and I will deliver it," said Sarah. The boy hesitated, but Sarah held out her hand. "I will tell your mistress that I have taken the letter myself." The boy handed it over and disappeared quickly, as pages did, to some apparently urgent and interrupted business of his own in the boys' quarters.

Sarah paced quickly through the Park. She looked majestic. She clasped the head of her tall ivory stick, decorated with a golden silk tassel, and her hat was almost as large as Madame Gwynne's, the plumes as magnificent. She stepped out, pointing her small pretty feet with deliberation. She was abstracted, distant to her acquaintances in the Park, and they in wonder and awe stopped and turned and watched her growing smaller in the distance, stepping so deliberately between the lime trees towards the Palace.

"There would be a woman to rule England," remarked one of them.

Through the gates and along the passages of Whitehall, Sarah passed with the same abstraction and dignity. Only once did she speak when a page, laughing with an associate, backed into her, and found his apologies interrupted by a flow of language which he had never heard matched in the grooms' quarters.

She came to the King's apartments. A Guard opened

the door for her. Inside, the King was sitting, drinking chocolate. The dogs were crowded about his couch ; one of the spaniels had recently had puppies. The King was pulling the ear of the bitch and grinning at Dorset, who was talking alone with him. There was an atmosphere of the recently told story in the room, but Sarah ignored it. After a glance at her face, the King nodded Dorset away. When the door had shut, he turned to her. Silently, she held out Anne's letter.

Anne stiffened with resistance when Sarah came into her room next morning. She had not heard from Mulgrave ; she felt harassed and defenceless and she knew she had no strength to bear another quarrel. But Sarah seemed to be bringing peace this morning. She came up softly to Anne and took her hand.

"I have the barge ready, Highness, let us go to Chelsea——" and as Anne started to speak, she said quickly, almost pityingly : "No, Princess, Lord Mulgrave started at dawn for Greenwich. He has been sent with the new company to relieve Tangiers by the King's orders."

Anne did not speak at all. "You can never leave it," cried Sarah almost desperately. "You *must* understand. You belong to too much—too much belongs to you. You forgot a little while how much you want these things—after the King, your father ; after him, your sister ; after her, *you*. Neither your sister nor your stepmother will ever bear a son now. I think you cannot forget you will be Queen of England. Whitehall, Princess," said Sarah earnestly, looking at her, trying to hold her mind, "Whitehall Palace and the Hydes, the Buckinghams, the Dorsets, all of them waiting to do what you wish to have done ; the Mazarines,

the Sedleys, the Portsmouths, praying for your indulgence ; Windsor and Hampton and Kensington and Islington, all of them yours. Tories up and Whigs down as you say ; to be prayed for throughout the kingdom by name, our Gracious Queen Anne ; to give bounty to crowds around your coach . . .” Sarah stopped, relaxed. Anne was caught, following her at last, seeing the palaces, the crowds of people, hearing the prayers.

“Master Rocke will sing to us in the barge, your Highness. He has a new song of Mr. Purcell’s which you have not heard.”

Then for a month or so Anne had no time to think or feel ; her father, the King, Mrs. Churchill, Mrs. Apsley—someone always had some scheme for her. She was given attention, flattered, consulted. She began to see herself as a person of importance, even as Sarah had said. Before the winter was out came fresh talk of marriage proposals ; envoys from various princelings, even from so stalwart a monarch as the young King Charles of Sweden, were closeted with the King and the Duke and one or two prominent Ministers. Anne waited quietly, almost without curiosity, while they rejected suitor after suitor. She knew now that the choice of a husband did not lie in the hands of a royal princess. At the end of June they told her that the suit of Prince George of Denmark had been accepted and that negotiations had been opened for her marriage to him.

Anne felt relieved that the question was settled. There had been serious disturbances that summer. While the royal family were at Newmarket for the races, a fire had broken out destroying half the town, and sent them back, grumbling and disappointed, to

London before they had hardly tasted any sport ; and arriving in London, they discovered that this very fire had saved their lives, since there were half a dozen Whiggish conspirators waiting with loaded pistols in a certain Rye House on the road from Newmarket. The discovery of this plot made a tremendous uproar, for a number of very respectable gentlemen were concerned in it. The King and the Duke of York became enormously popular and Whitehall was crowded with Mayors and Sheriffs and deputations from all over the country nervously asserting their unshakable loyalty. Te Deums swelled in the churches in honour of the King's preservation, effigies of Whigs and Papists were carried through the streets ; but the fear of sudden death, that old terror of tramping crowds, awoke again in Anne's heart, and she was grateful for the gift of so soldierly a husband as Prince George of Denmark. It was safer to have a husband and a home.

IV

SARAH'S brother-in-law George Churchill was a close friend and adviser to Prince George, so Anne was able to learn much about her promised husband before ever she saw him. Sarah was enthusiastic. He was an honest Protestant, a God-fearing and good-natured man ; a soldier and not a verse-babbling courtier. He was said to have rescued the King his brother from death in the thick of battle, fighting tremendous odds. All this impressed Anne, and it evidently impressed the populace, for on the report of her betrothal she became almost as popular as her father and her uncle. There was a general feeling that this was a mating of the brave with the fair.

Her father alone seemed unwilling to give his blessing to the union, he grumbled vaguely about having another son-in-law in the same interest as the first. The Duke was suspicious of his Cousin William at The Hague. But as Cousin William sent his friend Bentinck to London as soon as he heard of the marriage proposals, to use all his influence against them with the King, the Duke's grumblings seemed without grounds. Anne wearily speculated as to the chances of Cousin William's success in shattering this betrothal as, she suspected, he had shattered the one projected between her and Charles of Sweden, and that early one between her and George of Hanover. Cousin William had too much to say about these matters.

But the King had made up his mind at last. The marriage was fixed.

Now Anne found herself busier than ever. There were clothes to be fitted, appointments to be made in the new household. She leant on Sarah for support and

companionship. Mrs. Churchill had become very necessary to her during the past few months. Her friend had grown older ; she was detached, busy with her own husband and children. Anne respected her for her preoccupation and was almost honoured by the affection Sarah vouchsafed to her.

Her uncle promised her the Cockpit for her married home, and an allowance of £20,000 a year, and as soon as these arrangements were made known, Anne was besieged by ladies anxious to take service with her. They gave her no rest. Anne was nearly distracted ; her father had to approve every appointment, and between making excuses for his delay in answering their applications, inventing complimentary refusals, and, on her own behalf, pleading with her father for the friends she wished about her, she found herself tired out before the Prince had even set out from Denmark.

Not the least importunate was Mary Apsley, Semandra as she called her, who was now married to Sir Benjamin Bathurst and who wanted the post of Treasurer in the Denmark household for her husband. Anne had every hope of granting this request, but she could not hurry her father into a decision and meanwhile Semandra wrote almost daily asking why her dear, dear, dearest husband (for so she had playfully addressed Anne since childhood, even as Mary had been dear, dearest wife) had not answered her letter and how had she offended him ? Anne suspected that Semandra was becoming annoyed and wrote back almost apologetically. What with having to stand for hours to Mr. Oliver the manto maker while he fitted her, searching all over town for a woman who could knit her special silk embroidered stockings, replenishing her store of gloves and fans, besides carrying out her Court duties, she felt that

having to spend time on writing to Semandra was an unnecessary burden. But Mary Bathurst was touchy and Anne did not want to quarrel. Besides in some ways it was gratifying to be besieged by these protesting ladies, and have their living in one's gift. This was a new and pleasant sensation to Anne.

On July 19th the Prince was to arrive. It seemed to Anne, awaking that morning, that she had turned a new corner in her life ; for the first time she was to have status. Semandra's letters, however troublesome, made her see herself as others saw her, as an institution, a recognised figure, no longer as a young unmated princess. She drove out that morning through Hyde Park into the field beyond Tyburn. It was a hot summer day. Riders in the Park reined up and swept off their hats, though she was driving incognito. At Tyburn cross-roads there was some activity. Men were raising beams, gathering kindling wood together. A crowd of people, 'prentice boys, beggars, soldiers were standing about, and a couple of chairs had lingered to watch the preparations. Anne turned inquiringly to a page.

"They are building the scaffold for three of the conspirators who die to-morrow. Hung, drawn, *and* quartered, Highness," said the boy with relish. "And my Lord Russell will lose his head at Lincoln's Inn Fields."

The sun was very hot, the colours of the crowd, the gold paint on the sedan chairs moving off from the scaffold, the green of the heavy trees, the scarlet sashes of a couple of soldiers marching along towards the city, stood out with peculiar distinctness. Noises were acute, the jangling of the harness on the horses drawing Anne's coach was like bells. "Death to traitors,"

shouted an apprentice suddenly, waving his cap, and from the crowd came a low roar of approval. "God bless the Princess," cried the apprentice again, waving more boisterously and pointing to Anne's coach. The crowd awoke suddenly and surged towards her. She smiled and bowed and whispered to the page, "Tell him to drive home quickly."

They turned back into the Park. Inside her head something was repeating "Death to traitors—death to traitors." All, all perils were put out of the way now. Conspirators all caught in a trap; they were killing them all, even the only slightly guilty. "Kill them all, clear away obstacles and we shall at last be safe. Now the crowds cheer the King who murmured at him a year ago. Now they throw flowers at the Duke who spat at him as a Papist. Everything we do is right and they throw themselves on their knees as we pass. They will protect us themselves. Their lives are between us and danger."

And she, Anne, was to marry a prince of blood and they would live in a palace, a small stately palace, with all the gold-laced servants, the leather-jacketed mounted guards, the bobbars and bowers that go with royalty. "And I will be kind to them, dear good kind people," thought Anne, as her coach clattered back into St. James's courtyard.

Prince George arrived at Whitehall at four that afternoon. Anne was to receive him in her own apartment after he had had audience of the King and her step-mother. Sir Charles Cotterell, the master of ceremonies, who hurried anxiously all his days, receiving one distinguished guest after another, his forehead wrinkled up in anticipation of a page misplacing his feet, snatched

a moment from the reception at Whitehall to see that all was in readiness at St. James's. The Prince was to have a special chair with an arras both in the Duchess's apartments and in the Princess Anne's. Sir Charles supervised its placing, directed to be moved now farther to the right, now to the left, consulted a memorandum, pressed his hand to his forehead and, calling the ladies, gentlemen and boys to gather round, gave his final instructions. They were to convey to the Princess that the Prince would salute her on the cheek ; his style was to be "Royal Highness." He would stay so long and then withdraw to his lodgings.

Anne was calm during all this excitement. She made her toilet and carried out the final duties of preparation for the audience without fear and without elation. She was contented. She waited without nervousness when the Prince's coach rattled into the yard outside and while he paid his respects to her step-mother, and when finally he was announced at the doorway of her own apartment she smiled graciously, confidently at her new lover. It was the Prince who hesitated, slightly embarrassed, at the door. Then glancing to right and left, at his own politely immobile gentlemen, at primly uncurious ladies-in-waiting, he came forward, a little too eagerly, his hands slightly outstretched. He kissed Anne's hand and her cheek and then stepped back. His huge pock-marked face was strained with a kind of wistfulness. He smiled up at her, waiting in innocent hope for approval and friendliness.

He was square built, fair in complexion with a heavy fair wig, graceful and self-assured in his bearing, in spite of his attitude of childlike anticipation. And friendliness beamed out of his light blue eyes. Here he was, ready to await her commands. Anne's life of

George
50 years

indecision and fear, her shames and cowardices did not exist for him.

There was silence over the room. The deep yellow sunlight streamed in over the little court standing about Anne's chair. She drew a deep breath ; she smiled, accepting him. The silence broke. The Prince was led to his arrased chair. The formalities of conversation opened.

This meeting over, the wedding preparations which had been held up for the Prince's reception were resumed. Anne had never been so busy in her life. Mary Bathurst wrote again : why had not Anne answered her letters, and had she offended ? Again Anne replied, desperately :

“ Why would not my deare Semandra writt to me before but keep herself uneasy all this while and now I must tell you yt I am not nor never was angry with you in all my life and I asure you no body has ever said anything against you to me and the reason why I said no more yt day you spoke to me was becaus I can never expres myself in words and therefore if ever you have more suspitions of me as I hope you will not after reading this letter lett me know them by a letter : but I asure you I love you well as ever tis true I have sometimes when I do not know it a very grave look wch has made others as well as you ask me if I was angry with them yt I lookd so gravly on them therefore do not mind my looks for I realy look grave and angry when I am not so another thing you tax me of is never sending for you wch is a thing I have not don I confess this great but has not bin my fault I asure you for the Prince stays with me every day from diner to prayers and by that time I com from prayers tis half and hour after four and on my

playing days from yt time I am always in expectation of company on thos days yt I do not play I comonly go to whitehall at six so yt yt hour an a half wch I have from prayers till I go to the Dutchess I am glad sometimes to get a litle of it alone it being the only time I have to myself and for ye other part of it the Prince ether comes to me or I go to him and we stay with one another till I go out thus you see I have told you very freely how I spend my time so you see yt tis not my fault I do not send for you . . .”¹

The wedding took place on July 28th old style, at St. James’s Chapel at ten o’clock at night.

All day long workmen had been busy erecting scaffolding in the streets about St. James’s and Whitehall. On the rivers boatmen had been working on barges, taking on board stores of fireworks, fixing festoons from boat to boat, anchoring lines of barges in mid-stream in a row along the Whitehall reach. There was shouting in the streets; balladmen sold broadsheets of hymeneal odes decorated by libellous cuts of Anne and George wreathed about in cupids and flags. The Duke of York’s yellow ribbons decorated the caps of small boys—crowds gathered outside St. James’s Palace and cheered everyone, be it a troop of household guards trotting along Pall Mall or one of Prince George’s gentlemen trying to rediscover the entrance to his apartments, or a couple of foresters carrying to the kitchens a fat buck which had been specially killed at Windsor for the wedding feast.

As twilight drew on there were fizzles and splashes from the arbours placed at regular intervals in the streets.

¹ From *The Letters of Two Queens*. Hon. B. Bathurst, 1924.

Then suddenly, one after another, illuminated tableaux sprang out, full grown, in fiery birth, into the blue air of evening. All along Pall Mall and Whitehall and Westminster groups of statuary came to life in the light of well-controlled flames. Arbours of complicated decoration showed Anne, seated on a royal chair surrounded by cherubim ; boys playing with dolphins about the feet of George arrayed as a soldier of Denmark ; the Royal Arms everywhere wreathed with laurel. Mysterially, from a convenient spot in each tableau, poured wine.

The crowds roared, fought their way to the statuary, roared again, were distracted by the sight of distant fireworks, fought their way elsewhere, mothers catching up infants, beggars hopping along rather late, laying out with their sticks, thieves snatching and dashing away and roaring louder than the rest to cover their tracks. The crowd surged through Whitehall, scattering through the lanes and passages between the buildings to the riverside ; pushed to Westminster to line the waterside and watch the sights. They were indeed magnificent. Great sprays of fire sprang out, whistling, from the barges, described beautiful curves and descended to the water. Flowers and trees, British lions, Danish flags, all soared, brightly coloured, into the blackness, stayed suspended for one ecstatic moment in the air and then returned to the water, disintegrating with dignity. As time went on the fireworks multiplied. Not one or two but, it seemed, a hundred barges sent up fountains of fiery reds, blues, and greens. The fountains touched and mingled and died. The water was satiny black, shining with coloured stars, broken by rippled and imperfect replicas of the royal portraits and allegorical groups continually thrown into the air above. On the



His Royal Highness George Prince of Denmark, High Admiral of
England General of her Majesty's Forces & Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports &c.

J. Kneller del. J. B. Long sculp. Angl. 1694. 100. 100.

J. Smith sculp.

Sold by J. Smith, 11 St. John's, 1694. 100. 100.

left the palace of Whitehall with all its irregular buildings, its myriad roofs, continually appeared in the coloured light and disappeared into darkness.

Across the roaring of the crowd, the trampling of feet, the splashing and whistling, rang continually the peal of bells, cheerful and inharmonious, from all the churches of London.

The noise, confused and softened, came through the windows of the chapel of St. James's, where the Bishop of London was marrying the Princess Anne to His Royal Highness of Denmark. Behind the young couple stood the Duke of York, grave, a little scornful, lined ; his long face made even longer and narrower by his heavy fair wig, descending below his shoulders. Beside him stood his wife, dark and beautiful, the vivacity of her youth already tamed to resignation by many years of adversity. Beside these two was the King, swarthy, amused, half attentive, one hand playing with a tassel of his sword belt, and, in all his inattentiveness, completely conscious of his degree, of his power over every man under that roof.

In the body of the chapel stood rows of men and women ; the best blood in England. Hundreds of candles lit the chapel ; the light gleamed on a score of perfectly contrived wigs, heavy, deliberate wigs of auburn, yellow, or black which framed coarse, intelligent faces, and lay consciously on shoulders of velvet and brocade. The light shone whitely on the necks and bosoms of scores of women ; rounded un-girlish women ; with faces sophisticated, witty, and sensual even in abstraction. Jewels from rings and buckles and sword-hilts and belts caught the light and flashed among the velvet and lace.

The service was short. The couple knelt, rose, took

hands ; the blessing was pronounced and they turned to the congregation. There was murmuring and shuffling. Everyone bowed as the royal family passed out, and then the courtiers, whispering, laughing, followed the royal group through the palace to the Princess's apartments.

There was a long banquet. The King, at his best on such an occasion, jested and was endearingly cordial to everyone. Prince George beamed, understanding little that was said, but basking in the festivity. Anne smiled and made conversation about her marriage presents, the weather, and how delightful it was to live in the Cockpit, and the Duke of York, having been persuaded for once to drink a good deal, forgot his gravity for a time.

The couple were escorted to their bedroom ; the curtains of the huge four-poster drawn back. It would seem that the festivities were over. But the King lingered in the room, moving chairs here and there, gazing at pictures, calling up one gentleman after another to tell them a story of which he had been reminded by something. They all told stories. They slapped each other on the back. Charles, ever hospitable, remembered George was the guest of honour, pulled him over to his group and told him carefully in French, stories which George did not understand though he beamed with good humour.

Dawn was breaking. The shouting of the crowd had long since died away. The arbours had burnt themselves out. Only from one or two now did slowly gathering drops of wine splash at long intervals on to the stones beneath. Princess Anne had fallen sideways from one tableau, greatly impaired cherubim continued

valiantly to fly without wings or feet on another. Danish standards lay in fragments over the cobbles. Everything was quiet.

Even, eventually, did silence settle over St. James's, and the apartments of the Prince and Princess of Denmark.

AS soon as Anne had settled into the Cockpit, and the excitement of the new order of things had died down, she turned her attention to the question of Mrs. Churchill's position. Her other friends had been satisfied with posts in the household, even Semandra's Sir Benjamin had been duly created Treasurer of the Household, but Sarah was still contentedly devoting herself to her mistress the Duchess of York. Long ago, when the marriage was first discussed, Sarah, it seemed to Anne, had speculated about the future in terms which seemed to include her presence in the new *ménage*. She had, thought Anne, trying hard to remember, spoken of "us." Yet later she had said nothing, had asked nothing. Indeed when Anne had hesitatingly suggested that her friend choose a place for herself in the Denmark household, Sarah had raised her eyebrows and, a second later, smiled indulgently. Anne grew uneasy; perhaps Sarah would not come. Yet to leave her at St. James's, involved with duties which would scarcely allow her more than a short visit each day to the Cockpit, was unthinkable. Even a week's absence from Sarah left her bewildered. She quickly lost touch with the outer world without her interpreter, and now she was beginning to need a key to the political mazes which formed and reformed themselves about her day by day. Then, too, with her own household she began to see the need for an adviser in the domestic intrigues which were ever being born among her ladies. One could scarcely change a page or superannuate an old dresser without a cry of "Corruption" from one clique, or "Beware" from another. And Lady Clarendon, far from being awed into respect by her niece's marriage, was even closer to

her elbow, offering advice, hinting danger, silently expressing disapproval.

When Sarah came to see her, a few days after the emigration to the Cockpit, Anne laid these troubles before her, yet without daring to suggest the remedy. Sarah, shaking her head, said it was true; princes had no friends, and it was hard to know whom to trust in a court. Anne waited. Nothing more seemed to be developing. A black page brought in tea in cups of orange and gold from China. While the custom was still looked at askance by the older generation, Anne had taken up tea-drinking in the hope that the herb would cure her defluxions. Besides she was fond of it. She was fond of all food and drink, especially of little tit-bits taken here and there between meals.

She looked at the page and the tea critically and with enjoyment. She was still sufficiently impressed by her new position to feel housewifely and conscious of the machinery of the household—though she had little enough to do with the details. She called the black child to her, pulled at his sash, then dismissed him and, head slightly on one side, watched his retreat. The tea was delicious, Sarah said, and the cups exquisite. “A gift from my sister,” said Anne absently. She was wondering how to approach the subject of Sarah’s post again. But Sarah suddenly saved the situation.

“Perhaps,” said Mrs. Churchill, thoughtfully, between sips of tea, “I could help you. Probably your appointments are made—perhaps there are no more places to be filled. You have the friends you wish to have about you. But I think were I beside you I could help you. Dear Highness, I have known you for very many years. . . . And now, though I should have to

consult the Duchess, I would come to you if I can help . . . if you still want me, Princess."

Anne could scarcely speak. Her face and neck were pink with confusion. Sarah rose. "Consult His Highness the Duke and I will wait your commands."

She withdrew. She had just left the room when the Duke of York appeared. Anne could scarcely wait to answer his questions. He had many to ask: was she comfortable, happy; had she sufficient means for her expenses; was she in good health? He asked these questions every day, holding her arms and looking searchingly into her eyes. He loved her devotedly; she was made impatient by his love and wished always to shake off his caresses. Sometimes she felt sorry for him. Mary had undoubtedly turned away from him under the influence of that Dutch husband of hers, and now he turned to her sister for the response he craved from his family.

At last Anne found a pause in which to insert her request. She put her question hurriedly. Might Mrs. Churchill be appointed one of her Bedchamber Ladies?

"This would make you happy?" asked James, smiling at her.

"Yes, yes," cried Anne, "I need a good friend here."

James laughed. "Your Uncle Rochester does not speak well of your friend, but we will risk his anger. I will tell the Duchess she must lose her maid of honour then, and little Mrs. Churchill must take herself across the Park."

"I may write and tell her now?" asked Anne eagerly.

"Yes, yes, to-day if you wish," answered the Duke, and kissed her.

The next year was perhaps the happiest of Anne's life. She had her little Court at the Cockpit, a miniature of her father's at St. James's. She had an ample allowance, she had her husband, tall, safe George. She had Mrs. Churchill.

Anne knew the Court at Whitehall and St. James's laughed at George, but she closed her ears to the laughter. She was beginning to notice that the friends she loved were seldom loved by the world. She had been for years on the defensive for Sarah. Criticism of her friends made Anne obstinate, mutely loyal. She could not have told anyone the reason for or the quality of her love for George ; but where she loved she was uninterested in defects. Dullness was George's fault in the eyes of the quick-witted gentlemen at Whitehall. Even her uncle, usually gentle where his niece was concerned, was moved to exasperation by the Prince. "I've tried him drunk and I've tried him sober," said King Charles. "But there's nothing in him." But to Anne he was something which had been given her for her own, to be cared for, indulged, amused, and loved. She had never had a grown-up before, given officially into her hands. She loved his simple stupidity, his good nature. She loved his height and physical strength, his occasional feats of horsemanship, his capacity for drinking enormously ; she loved his infrequent pronouncements, so balanced and obvious and uncontradictable—even occasionally so wise, in a generation of prevaricators. She was delighted when he distinguished himself in any way, called everyone's attention to his talents. And the large kind-faced creature loved her in return. They fussed over each other's health as though they had been sixty and seventy instead of in the prime of youth. They tried to help

each other, gently refused the help ; they told their friends of each other's qualities.

They never discussed matters of importance. It never occurred to them to debate State questions, to give or receive advice from one another on these matters. They passed remarks on things about them, recounted to each other the happenings of the day, the state of the weather, what the Duchesse de Mazarine was wearing at the theatre.

Anne discussed State questions—when she did discuss them, which was not often—with Sarah still. Sarah was still the mind in Anne's kingdom. She was becoming more and more accessible to Anne. Since her attachment to the Cockpit the intimacy between them had increased ; there was a familiarity in their relationship which had not existed before ; perhaps it grew up because Anne was, like Sarah, a married woman now, and a married woman who, as they discovered very soon, was to bear a child. Anne's love and gratitude to Mrs. Churchill increased day by day. She was always *there*, ever patient, always interpreting. Anne could not bear that there should be any bar between them ; the barrier of her rank particularly was obnoxious. She suggested shyly that they might, to show the real quality of their friendship, drop title and ceremony and call each other by made-up names, just two ordinary names, like any couple of matrons. Mrs. Morley and Mrs. Freeman, Anne suggested. Sarah chose the name Mrs. Freeman because it suited, she said, her blunt, honest manners.

Times were good for the royal family. Since the Rye House executions, the Whigs had faded away. There were no grumblings, no processions of protest, no more angry broadsheets sold in the streets. The roisterers in the taverns sang of the discomfiture of the

scurvy republican plotters. The King, Anne heard, had made things very, very safe by the simple expedient of removing the charters from the towns liable to show too much independence. All the towns were governed by members of the King's party. Parliament was not to be summoned for a while ; and let no one complain. The King's few guards had grown into a standing army large enough to defend him, and troops were being recalled from outposts in Africa in a very purposeful way. Anne's father, the Duke, was handling the affairs of the nations. Test Act or not, he was back in office, with Rochester, his brother-in-law, and Sidney Godolphin, a pleasant tactful young man, who was steadily making his way upwards, to help him. The Duchess of Portsmouth, "that Carwell woman" who had been frightened into an alliance with foxy Shaftesbury, had come back into the right camp with Sunderland at her heels. Shaftesbury himself was dead ; Monmouth, who had not come out unscathed from the Rye House plot, was in exile in Holland. And money was being delivered with praiseworthy regularity from the enemy in France into the King's coffers, money enough to pay an army to keep any amount of republicans at bay.

The September after her marriage Anne and her husband accompanied the King and the Duke of York to Portsmouth for some yachting and a review of the fleet. She and George were left behind when the two elder Stuarts found themselves among their beloved ships. Charles, who liked to appear an amused dilettante in the council room, became a serious man with sailing craft. He and James stood about the docks talking in low tones to each other, earnestly discussing the cut of jibs and the set of sails. Anne and George stood behind,

a little bored but quite polite, trying to look responsive when the King, excited by a race, turned to them and called for approval over a piece of good seamanship. He and James walked, it seemed, for miles along the docks, stopping to investigate small craft tied up there. Charles had strong notions on tonnage and speed and balance, but he always deferred respectfully to James, whose seamanship was not denied by the fiercest Whig. They sailed their own yachts, too, in the races ; when Anne and George stayed ashore and watched their progress through perspective glasses.

After Portsmouth they turned back to Winchester for the races. The King was seriously considering substituting Winchester for Newmarket as the smartest race-course. He had been irritated by the fire at Newmarket ; besides, the place had been a hotbed of Whiggism. At Winchester Tories were in the ascendant, and the town, too, had behaved in a creditably loyal fashion, presenting him with ground to build on, timber and stone. Of course Newmarket had its traditions—but the place was being overrun with vulgar people and the road from London was infested with highwaymen. A new palace at Winchester would be delightful. A new palace, complete with kennels, stables, mews, every necessity for a sporting gentleman . . . The Earl of Sunderland down from London with despatches found it impossible to keep the King's attention on affairs of State. He broke off continually to receive architects ; he interrupted with a new suggestion for the left wing. The King loved building. The Earl began to wonder, distracted, whether the King would ever go back to Whitehall at all.

Anne was enjoying herself too. The country was ideal for riding, which she understood far better than

sailing. She and the Duchess hunted the hare with beagles while her father went after the stag. The Prince was distressed that she should exercise herself so strenuously in her condition. But Anne was not at all weighed down by such a responsibility. The bearing of children seemed so much a part of daily life among her married friends that she scarcely gave a thought to her pregnancy.

So they passed September and October, hunting the hare, the stag, hawking, racing. Prince George was bewildered and charmed by the crowds of people ; the Hydes, Lord Clarendon, his brother Rochester, whose round shining old faces so belied their grave manner ; young Cornbury, Clarendon's son, gallant and feckless ; Dorset, singing at every opportunity, jolly Kit Albemarle always drunk, and lately created Chancellor of Cambridge in place of Monmouth, much to his amusement ; the old Prince Rupert, still keen-witted and full of vigour, a fresh lady in train, to whom he explained with an old sportsman's enthusiasm obvious points in the racing. Sometimes the King and he would steal away and gaze at some chemical wonder they had contrived, which seemed to them for a while so much more alluring than their mistresses' lips.

Tall, handsome Churchill was there too, sober and thoughtful, yet beloved by every carouser. Every company was the gayer for his presence, every lady felt the lovelier for his glance. Yet he never made love, never betted wildly or indulged in practical jokes. George liked him, found here a man with whom he could exchange those plain facts, coins of practical information, in which he delighted. Anne did not know if she liked him or not. He was so removed, so *plain*. No one so handsome or successful could be so

overt, earnest, and charming. She trusted his capacity, but felt uneasy in his presence.

Sir Charles Sedley, the libertine poet, was there too, growling at witty young men who made allusions to his daughter's condition—she was with child by the Duke of York again and tremendously enjoying herself at the races. Of all his mistresses, none had such a complete hold over the Duke as Catherine Sedley—and she was not pretty either. Dark hair, heavy dark lashes and brows, rather pallid, slightly sulky in expression—but the Duke always had ugly mistresses; “his priests give them to him for penances,” laughed his more discriminating brother. Catherine was a marvellous talker; she had, James might have pointed out, the wit that the King's ladies usually lacked.

Arlington, Bath, Sunderland—all were there but the Whig Lords who sulked and wrote fresh schemes to Monmouth in exile. But riding home from the chase behind the King, Anne heard him say to the Duke that he missed many familiar faces. He looked around and smiled a little sadly. “We are getting old, Jamie—or times are changing. This is not the company I used to see when we went a-holidaying a few years ago. Buckingham, the villain, won't come again” (he was out of favour and had retired to the country), “Rochester, dear lad, dead and in hell—do you remember when he picked my pocket and left me in the lurch to pay the account in that Newmarket brothel? And the boy in Holland . . .”

James's face grew sullen. He always feared Charles would recall Monmouth, his favourite son.

“The best time has gone,” shrugged the King. “Now that my enemies are dead and the place is quiet—I'm too old. But we'll have that new building at

Winchester, I think, whatever friend Godolphin has to say of his Treasury."

When the Court moved back to Whitehall the days were still full of pleasant activity. There were concerts in the music rooms of the palace; Mr. Purcell had essayed a new branch of composition, a sonata in three parts in imitation of the Italians. It was time, he explained, for gravity to be brought into the national music, which was too much given over to levity and balladry. It was written for two violins and a bass to the organ. Anne was interested in violins; they had recently become popular and she liked their silky tones. Still, it was recognised, she was glad to see, that the guitar and lute were the best instruments for accompanying the voice. She did not sing much now; George had no musical sense, and singing made her remember things she thought she had forgotten.

Then there were always sights to see: a new lion at the Tower, or a strange beast, a crocodile or rhinoceros, brought back from the East by a merchantman, and George and Anne would take their barge down the river, slowly, because the river traffic was so great, to the docks, where they boarded the huge ship, to the accompaniment of much bowing and scraping from the captain, and would look amazedly at the beast in its cramped cage. Anne never knew what to say about the animals, but she would smile at the black man who guarded the cage and perhaps remark that it looked very cruel. George would exclaim, "Mon Dieu, est-il possible?"

Or George would go by himself to see a show of horses in the Park. Some Turkish mares had recently been imported from Vienna, during the siege; beautiful little horses they were, said George, so nimble and graceful and spirited, trotting lightly like deer. The

King and the Duke were delighted by them and their saddles, wrought all with silver and gold, with reins of silk and chains of silver. Sometimes George went to M. Foubert's riding academy near Piccadilly and with other young men of the nobility, Northumberland, the King's son, and Norfolk, and Lansdown, exercised himself at javelin flinging, pistol shooting, and picking up gauntlets at the point of a sword, all the while on horseback. Northumberland was by far the best at these games. He was a charming young man, swarthy and tall, with good manners though without much wit.

In December the Thames froze over. This made a great sensation. Everyone flocked to the river for skating and sledging, and as the ice grew firmer enterprising tradesmen set up shop there. Soon from the Temple to Southwark there was a row of shops with their appropriate signs, exactly as on shore, where one could buy anything from earthenware to point-lace collars. Bulls were baited, foxes hunted, oxen roasted—all the occupations which seemed ordinary enough on land were endowed with tremendous glamour on the ice. Hackney coaches plied from Somerset House to the south bank. Continuous carnival was held there, and all the merrier because a fog which descended on the city at the same time as the frost made all kinds of bumpings and trickery possible.

The King was delighted by the frost. He insisted that the whole family should accompany him to an expedition on the ice. They obediently went, explored the fair, bought fairings at the booths, tried the experiment of riding across the river in a coach. George, as usual, was doubtful about the wisdom of the expedition for his wife, but Charles laughed at him. The King was the

first to try everything. He tried his hand at throwing at the cock, at skittles, and cup and ball, and rallied the others to do the same. But James and George were not so easily put into holiday mood. James thought it beneath him ; George tried his hand at cup and ball, failed miserably and retired pink and mumbling rather crossly to himself while Charles roared with laughter at his discomfort. Then Charles delighted the spectators by buying a pair of skates and skating off with a fine turn down a specially roped-off avenue. He came back blowing a little and shaking his head. "You do better than me, Jamie," he said, holding out the skates. The Duke could not resist skating. He did a few beautiful steps, to roars of applause from the bystanders. He often skated on the pond in St. James's Park and had kept himself in practice. The King laughed and nudged him. "We learnt a thing or two in Holland, Jamie, after all. Do you remember having to borrow guilders from Harry Bennett to buy skates ? If you *must* travel," said the King turning to Anne with the ghost of a wry smile, "travel when young and you may pick up a trick or two. Your father and I are too old to go travelling now—though it's hard enough to make him understand this."

In a minute more her uncle had seen a printing booth and was hard after it. He was jovial with the printer, clapped him on the back, asked him if *he* could skate, told him he ought to go to Holland and learn, roared with laughter then, and asked him what he did here ? The printer, stammering with pleasure, said he had done a good trade printing names of the nobility. "They like to have it for a memorial, Sir. Printed on ice, most rare occurrence, Sir. They'll show it to their children, Sir. 'Printed on ice on the river, this year 1684.'"

"You shall print our names, every one," declared

the King, "and you can tell everyone here you've worked for the King. What are your rates now?"

The printer said he would be honoured to print for His Majesty and their Highnesses free of charge. The King threw him a gold piece.

The printer went to his machine. He perspired with the effort of exactly and beautifully reproducing on paper the names of his distinguished clients. The King stood by, dictating slowly, "Charles, King; Katherine, Queen; James, Duke; Mary, Duchess; Anne, Princess; George, Prince . . ." He paused, glanced round at Anne wickedly. "No, hold your work a moment. We must have *all* the party, but there's one among us whose name we don't know."

Anne giggled. George and the Duke and the Duchess and Queen smiled broadly.

"Here's a problem," said the King. Then he snapped his fingers. "I have it—you remember the joke they had in the Netherlands, James—we heard it often enough.—Now, Master Printer, at the end of your list, print one more name here: 'Hans im Kelder,' which signifies in good English, 'Jack in the Cellar,' our unknown friend. So; and now your name and abode according to the regulations and 'Printed on the Ice 1684,' as you said."*

The family moved away, each with a list of names. Anne was getting tired. She and George got into one of the river boats, decorated with flags, which were being used as sleds, and were drawn to the bank. The King waved to them.

Later they heard that he had exhausted all the others, who had gone back to Whitehall. But the King stayed all night on the ice, trying one pleasure after another.

* The curious may see this card at the London Museum.



Portrait of a Lady, by Sir J. W. Smith, 1780.

The month that Anne became twenty years old, February 1684, her first child was born, dead. Bearing children came into the natural scheme of life for her ; she had felt some stirrings of interest over the question of its sex ; for it became more and more evident that Anne's children would succeed to the throne—though her stepmother still hoped for a son. But Anne knew vaguely there would be many children ; that of that many some would die. Children had to die ; all mothers expected to lose several children from their large families.

It chagrined her that the first child should be still-born, but the news did not make her miserable. When she heard it she turned her head away and showed little interest in the condolences that her relations and friends offered her, standing with grave faces around her bed. They brought her the small waxen body. She looked at it with faint distaste and shut her eyes. She hoped chiefly that George was not disappointed. But George seemed quite confident, comforted by the vista of years to come. He patted her hand and told her not to grieve, clumsily said kind things, and then, relieved to be rid of an embarrassing subject, hurried on to a description of his new Turkish mare *à ménage*. Anne's family were more grieved than she was herself. Her father spoke of the will of God, her stepmother wept a little and remembered the death of little Isabella.

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The same month, a year later, Sarah came into Anne's closet to tell her that the King had had an apoplectic fit. He had risen that morning feeling unwell and suddenly, while being shaved, had fallen into the arms of Mr. Bruce, one of his gentlemen of the Bedchamber. He had been bled, had recovered consciousness and was now in bed.

"They summoned the Duke while he was still dressing and he came, shoe on one foot and slipper on the other," said Sarah.

"Is it serious, truly?" asked Anne unsteadily.

Sarah eyed her gravely and nodded. "We must be ready."

For the next four days Whitehall was in suspense. There was stillness in the great galleries and audience rooms. Only the Sunday before there had been a rout, the courtiers had crowded round the basset table, while the Mazarine's French boy sang love songs. There was shouting and swearing and laughter, the jangling of swords unbuckled and cast on the floor as the air grew close and stakes rose high. The King had lain on a divan in one corner, Mazarine and Cleveland and Portsmouth around him, dividing his attention between their charms and the gossip of his friends. Servants had hurried through the corridors bringing wine and delicacies for the guests. The Palace had been in an uproar.

Now it was quiet. Courtiers stood in the ante-chambers, grave, whispering to one another. Servants hurried along the corridors, but on tiptoe, bearing basins, towels, steaming cordials to the King's bedchamber. Gentlemen of the Bedchamber, coming off duty for a while, were besieged by friends raising inquiring eyebrows. Here and there were little knots of peers, discussing the future; weighing chances, pitting Papists against Protestants in the event of a Papist King, drawing up paper Cabinets, speculating on the chances of Parliament being summoned.

Outside the Palace precincts, which had been closed when the King fell ill, crowds of citizens waited, their faces upturned towards the windows of the Palace.

Through Tuesday and Wednesday the King was in pain. Thursday he rallied a little. Anne went over to Whitehall, but her father was with the King and she felt uncomfortable waiting for news in the ante-chambers. She was expecting another child in May and her step-mother advised her to go home to the Cockpit. They would send her bulletins. Throughout Thursday there was a surge of excitement. The King had practically refused to take the sacrament from Bishop Ken. Then there were whispers ; a priest had come, been slipped in through the private staircase. Some said the King had declared himself a Papist, others that it was all a rumour ; it would cost anyone his life to bring a priest to Whitehall. Still later, he would not take communion. "I have already made my peace with God," he said.

On Friday he was still alive but in pain. He had had a night of suffering, had spoken to James, given his last commands. "Be kind to my children and do not let poor Nelly starve." Anne, waiting at the Cockpit, wished it were all over. She loved her uncle, but dying, he did not seem to her to be the same person. She could not imagine that dark, lined face strained with suffering, the smile fixed rigidly on the mouth, the wrinkles creasing the corners of his eyes—for he would smile, even more than usual if he were in pain. She did not wish to see him. She knew him as well as ever she could know him ; these last hours could not deepen her love or give her anything of him that she had not already. She had never known him well, but perhaps she had known him no less than his greatest friends.

It was strange ; they said he had repented, had wept and bewailed his sins. That was difficult to imagine to oneself. Were those lean, sensitive hands, that so deftly manipulated scientific instruments, dissected frogs and

lizards, turned the pages of a book of verse, caressed the dark hair of a mistress, clasped tightly in prayer? Those fingers, slender and capable, that played impatiently with a sword-hilt or lazily combed through the coat of a favourite spaniel—were they knit together in agony, while he asked forgiveness of sins which seemed to him, only last Sunday, to be not sins but the blessings of life?

He had been so light-hearted. Anne's throat tightened. She was surprised by grief; she had remembered him suddenly, strolling in the Privy Garden, poking at a root with his stick, smiling down at her, giving half his attention to some saga of shopping or dancing she told him. And now he was caught by surprise with death. He had not had time to grow old and infirm like men who die. He had not finished yet.

They brought word on Friday about noon that her uncle had died, quietly, unconscious. The gentleman bringing the message hesitated and added, "His Majesty is anxious for you, Madam. He begs you will consider your health and rest a little now."

"His Majesty . . .?" began Anne, and then stopped.

Her father was King of England.

VI

UP till her father's accession, Anne's opinions had been, as she herself knew, merely ornamental. She had only a conversational point of view on political affairs, and, except where she felt personal security was at stake, her feelings were not in the least stirred by tumults in the Government. She was too ignorant to look beneath the surface ; she could not realise that anything less palpable than rude shouts, processions of protests, or actual plots could signify danger to her house.

But when her father came at last to the throne, she found herself raised one step higher, suddenly among the machinery of government. She found herself in daily contact with ministers, who, she discovered, were active doers of good or ill, not merely busy men running hither and thither on what she had vaguely dismissed before as State Business. More important still, she realised with something of a shock that her father was a real, a powerful man. In spite of his position during the last two years of his brother's reign, Anne had always regarded him as the exiled Duke ; a man who had been a success in the Navy and had fallen into disgrace ; a man whose foolishness, she thought, in matters of religious belief, whose old-fashioned obstinacy, had brought about his fall. A mistaken man, with strange, unreasonable impulses which, in the fettering circumstances of an exile, were simply ridiculous or pitiable, but in any case sterile.

But now he was King his impulses were law ; his idiosyncrasies made up the fabric of government. This exile whom she had known all her life, this thwarted man whose weaknesses and obstinacies had annoyed her ever since childhood, had become an actual and active

person. Little twists of personality which had externalised themselves in actions which had irritated her at various times during her home life, would now externalise themselves in the council chamber and shake the whole of England.

There was his Catholicism too ; Anne, considering it now for the first time impersonally, felt cold with horror. *She* knew what this meant to him. She knew how his faith was white hot. She had never thought of it as a positive thing before ; had merely considered it as an unnecessary disability which brought them into danger. But now, she saw his religion as a weapon in his hands. Now, he could use it ; he was no longer merely to suffer for it.

Like something coming to life within her, Anne's love for her own Church, for the rites of the English faith and all they implied (blood of the martyrs under Mary Tudor, the sufferings of the sad-eyed Huguenot exiles with their bundles and their little ones, now roaming the streets of English cities), flamed up in her heart and burnt like one of the great wax tapers in Westminster Abbey. At the thought of harm to this faith her muscles stiffened, she felt herself becoming allied, mutely, to a great nation of people waiting, staunchly, to resist and die.

She felt she should warn someone. They did not know what he was ; how he burned to bring England back to Rome. He had been a quiet enough Papist as Duke of York. He would be a quiet Papist as King—perhaps as quiet as his brother had been. Anne thought she knew better.

Nothing alarming happened at first. He attended Mass as publicly as possible ; the doors were left open so that all could see their King busy with Romish rites ;

but the coronation ceremony at least was performed according to the Church of England. And he was not too ill disposed towards his brother's Protestant ministers. Rochester and Clarendon, his brothers-in-law, staunch Protestants, were made Lord Privy Seal and Lord High Treasurer; Godolphin was made Chamberlain to the Queen, and even Sunderland got himself made Secretary—Sunderland who had brought about nearly every misfortune that James had suffered.

Anne found herself scrutinising these people, metaphorically tapping at their character as she would the shell of an egg—were they sound? Why had the King chosen this man or that? She became aware of the scaffolding of intrigue beneath every man's conduct. Now, when her whole future was shown clearly to be dependent on every little movement, she saw that an understanding of the criss-cross of affairs was necessary. Yet her untrained mind could not comprehend it. Knowing the perils, she yet grew easily tired trying to unravel the skein and would give up and accept what she heard reported at its face value. But she watched the King closely. She understood him.

When Parliament had been summoned—the first for four years—James asked for a large allowance. That was granted. Then he asked for the removal of the Penal Laws against the Catholics, and Anne knew her fears had been justified.

To free the Catholics! So that they should spring up, climb into power, in the army, the navy, in the Government! So that they should have their hands on the ropes, waiting the bidding of their Catholic King! Anne shook her head as she listened to her friends discussing the demand, Godolphin, and Lord Churchill and his wife. She could have said, "I told you so."

But before any protest could be made came news that Monmouth had landed in the west and the peasants had risen to proclaim him King.

Anne's feeling towards Monmouth was chiefly indignation. Her contempt and fear of her father as a person did not make her lenient towards her bastard cousin who had dared to raise his standard against the divine monarchy. She thought him outrageous ; the fact that he was a Protestant did not enter into the question. She would have given as much sympathy to a Protestant butcher who decided to make an attempt on the throne. She wondered how much goodwill he had from her sister. Everyone from The Hague brought reports of Monmouth's social success there during his banishment, of how he and the Princess had been seen about, skating and dancing ; which was strange, for Mary had never been seen to enjoy herself before since her marriage. Anne had never thought highly of Monmouth, gallivanting about the country as he always had, pretending to be able to touch for King's Evil, flaunting his treacheries in their faces. He was too easy with his tongue too, his flatteries slipped off too quickly. But Mary, of course, had not been living beside him as long as she had, and he must have cut a fine figure among those heavy Dutchmen.

Nevertheless the Oranges wrote polite letters to the King at the news of Monmouth landing, full of dismay at his nephew's impertinence. Of course they had shown him common courtesy during his exile, but they had never imagined. . . . It was suspicious, but Anne did not puzzle further over the question.

She was not particularly excited over the campaign in the west. She felt quite confident that a few days would see the end of it, and besides she was worrying

over the health of her second child, a girl, who had been sickly from birth. Anne had not strong maternal feelings, but she wanted this child to live. A second death might be an ill omen.

Her interest in the campaign was chiefly directed towards Lord Churchill's part in it. He and Sarah lived at St. Albans now, though Lady Churchill came to the Cockpit whenever she was on duty and stayed there while her lord was in the west country. Sarah was furious because her husband was not at the head of the troops ; the command had been put in the hands of Duras, Lord Feversham, a fat, lazy Frenchman, suspected of being Papist, and a friend of the King's. Churchill, as his wife pointed out many times, did all the work and killed the insurrection at Sedgmoor. Anne agreed heartily. The disappointment was only another proof of the King's inclination away from his Protestant friends. The Churchill family were staunch Anglicans—Anne, since her father's accession, had come to approve of them more and more, as an institution. They represented the things she approved and understood. In a world of shifters they were stable, they combined loyalty to the monarchy with the right religious principles. At least Lord Churchill did. Sarah would say anything of anyone if she felt so inclined ; and this, for Sarah, was perfectly allowable, for in the end she was always found to have been steering in the right direction.

Anne and Lord Churchill had another common tie, of which they did not speak—a tie of pity for sufferers. Anne had no humanity when she was frightened, but when her own safety was not at stake she was touched to the heart by those in want, by the wounded and tortured. Churchill, too, went white with anger at reports of cruelty, at death and torment handed out

carelessly, at the sight of old soldiers neglected and old servants forgotten. Both he and Anne were gentle with such people and succoured them when they could. Sarah never understood their feelings. She was far more practical. She investigated the stories of beggars, showed up most of them as frauds and sent them packing, or if honest gave them letters to friends who might need buttry men or laundry women. She never spent money on such people.

It was from Churchill's reserved comments that Anne learnt fully about the horrible things which were happening in the west after the insurrection. She spoke to her father, asked him to show mercy when she heard the tales; but his face grew troubled and he said these were hard matters for her to understand, there must be harsh remedies for great evils. Nevertheless he had ordered Jeffreys to show mercy and he himself had pardoned many. He believed the rebels were being dealt with mercifully.

He sounded sincere; yet Churchill, his most devoted servant believed him guilty. Anne had heard what he said to a poor woman who had come to ask relief for her rebel brother—"I wish you well, but this marble is as incapable of feeling as the King's heart." Churchill had been made bitter by the King's tolerance of cruelty. Jeffreys was burning, hanging, transporting, torturing hundreds of men and women every day, and drinking and laughing while he saw them suffer. Anne was puzzled. She felt, this time, her father had not been guilty of deliberate cruelty—yet he was a Papist, and Papists practised a code which was incomprehensible to other folk. It was as mysterious as witchcraft. Their mercy was not her mercy or their truth her truth. But even if he were not cruel, then he was hateful in his

helplessness. If he intended mercy, then what strange impotence was this, that allowed his servant to perform such deeds in his name? Let him stamp his foot and command mercy to be shown.

But nothing was done. The horrors went on. Once when she was being carried in her chair to St. James's, a woman broke out from the crowd and ran towards her. She hung on the arms of the guards who closed around the chair and cried, "Let me come to the Princess. Lady, show mercy to my son. He didn't know, Lady, they made him drunk and gave him a gun—ask your father to send him back to me. He didn't know, Lady." She cried. Tears ran down her cheeks and she struggled helplessly with the guards. Anne sat terrified. The men carried the chair on; she did not stop them. There was nothing she could do. She was frightened as if she had been confronted with some horror which had always been kept from her. She hated the woman for tearing at her heart. She wanted to forget her—quickly.

Events moved too fast for Anne, unused to concentration on public affairs. It had never mattered to her before whether Parliaments sat or were dismissed; now when the second session was held she waited eagerly for news. Even a Parliament picked from the most loyal Tories showed some resistance. The Monmouth rebellion had left the King with a standing army, which he showed no signs of disbanding. The nation always felt uneasy with a body of troops ready to march wherever the monarch felt a stirring disobedience. There was more in the matter than that moreover. This army was largely officered by Catholics, who were expressly forbidden by the Test Act to hold commissions. The King and Parliament came to grips on this matter at

once. James asked that the Test Act be repealed, that these officers might legally hold their positions. Parliament refused. James prorogued Parliament therefore and the Catholic peril was released to spread over the country like a thunder cloud.

Anne saw the familiar figures of old Tory Protestant ministers disappear one by one. Halifax was dismissed, Ormonde, Herbert, Montague; one by one sooner or later, on some excuse or another, they found themselves relieved of their posts. Rochester and Clarendon, her uncles, still remained in office, but everyone could see their days were numbered. It was becoming impossible for a Protestant now to hold a position of importance. Only Sunderland stayed, but he, he confessed, felt some leanings towards Rome.

Sunderland was a handsome man. He had a charming, accommodating manner, a perfect taste in clothes. His face was strangely fascinating, sensual and sensitive, with large up-sloping eyes, set rather too closely together, and a curved full mouth. He had a fair-haired, sharp-eyed wife. Sunderland and Jeffreys, it seemed, were to rule England now. They were both handsome in the same way. Jeffreys had a kind of demoniacal beauty, great lustrous eyes, well-moulded features. But the corners of his mouth and the brown depths of his eyes showed a hunger for cruelty at which Anne shuddered though she did not understand what frightened her.

The King saw nothing to dismay him in the faces of these two men. The days when Sunderland had plotted with Shaftesbury to disinherit his family, and the disrepute into which Jeffreys had brought his name during the assizes, had passed completely from his mind. These men were the men he wanted to help him carry

out the salvation of England. They were more ingenious even than he was himself.

Alone in the Cockpit, in her closet, while George drank with his own gentlemen, Anne puzzled weariedly over all this. The King had now, she heard, collected a secret band of half a dozen Catholics, including that servile priest, Petre. He was overriding the only safeguard of the nation's religion, the Test Act, and simply using his dispensing power to free whatever Catholics he wanted in office, as officers, ministers, or magistrates, from the Act's restrictions. There were rewards offered for apostasy ; more, the clergymen of the Established Church were being forbidden to preach against Rome.

If her father had stood alone perhaps the danger would not have been so great. She had not realised, at first, how Parliament was a living resistant body who would refuse a king. She had been brought up too near Whitehall, had heard so much of the power of individuals while she was young. It had always been Shaftesbury, or Danby, or Halifax, and above all, triumphant always at the end, her uncle, King Charles. Indeed, during her years of womanhood, Parliament had never been called. When the Commons refused to repeal the Test Act she had been surprised and a little frightened. Then there was something behind the King which had power, if it were allowed to escape out of thralldom ? But Commons or Lords, no one could resist Sunderland and Jeffreys with their guile and their watchfulness. Sunderland worked so quietly, one never knew whose trap he was preparing. He was watching, watching, all the time ; whispering a word into the King's ear. . . . And his religion ! What kind of a Protestant was he who could urge the King to such outrage ?

Anne felt as though something were closing around her. The King seldom spoke to her of religion ; she knew, even, that he had curtly forbidden the priests to speak to her on the subject. Sometimes he dropped a word about the true faith, a little wistfully, when he was alone with her. But Anne felt this silence was no protection. Everyone else was being persecuted into Catholicism ; what would befall her ? Would she be left alone in a nest of Romanists—her friends disgraced or deserted, her enemies ringed about her, watching with intent to—what ? Anne did not know. She felt she must reassure herself some way ; she sat down at the Japan cabinet and wrote to Mrs. Freeman. She wished she could say all she felt ; she did not know the words to convey her dread and loneliness. The letter seemed much too calm and insignificant : “ I was very much surprised when I heard of the four new privy councillors and I am very sorry for it, for it will give great countenance to those sort of people and methinks it has a very dismal prospect. Whatever changes there are in the world, I hope you will never forsake me and I shall be happy.”

Yes, there were always Mr. and Mrs. Freeman, so clever and active and wise. Mrs. Freeman was a rock and a staff. The Churchills would help her. They would know what to do.

On the King's birthday in October there were celebrations, a review of the troops and a ball at Whitehall. Anne ascending the stair to the Banqueting Hall wondered at the change everywhere. How gaily everyone had chattered, how happily they had mingled together, how delightful had been the good fellowship at the ball for the Queen's birthday two years before when her

uncle still lived ! There was that about her father, Anne thought, that put constraint on everyone. Her uncle's presence had illuminated the room, the women on his entry became more radiant, the men wittier, he caused a stir in any assembly. Not that he listened to the wit, or particularly remarked the beauty of the ladies in general—he was too much absorbed with his own circle. Yet he never forgot a name ; when his wandering eye lighted on a guest he would always raise his brows, as if interrogatively, would lift his hand in a peculiarly familiar and graceful fashion which he had caught from France. But on those who had the ill-grace to be over-familiar he would turn a rare gaze, fully, gravely, for a moment. They never forgot themselves again.

James, aiming for friendliness, produced formality. He disgusted and slightly frightened his subjects. One never knew when one would not offend. It was not a matter of undue familiarity ; the best-trained courtier of the old school venturing on what seemed an ordinary topic would find himself coldly answered. The King would grow snappish, turn away and speak to someone else near by in a pointed fashion about gentlemen who presumed on liberties allowed them, and the weary burdens of kings who had to deal with factious subjects.

He had tried to reform the Court of course. He had frowned on duelling, a frown of which Anne had approved ; he himself did not drink and discouraged it in others ; he himself kept mistresses but discouraged this too as a general practice. To do him justice, he had tried to set an example in purity, had banished his ugly Catherine Sedley, with the compensating title of Countess of Dorchester, to Ireland and told her sharply never to return. Only she *would* return and had returned, and her lover had surrendered once more in despair.

There was little quality at the ball to-night. Either, Anne supposed wearily, they were out of favour because of their religion or had preferred to stay where the wine still flowed freely. But the King would hardly notice this. He only cared to see those for whom he had a personal regard.

The hall as usual was magnificently decorated. Thousands of candles burnt in silver sconces and in the crystal chandeliers. The royal seat flamed in crimson and gold. The candlelight threw strange, moving shadows on to the walls so that the figures in the tapestry seemed to come alive. Its light was reflected in the floor, in the rounded curves of the fruit and shells and cherub faces in the carving about the doors and windows. The place was full of colour from the dresses of the guests.

Anne's stepmother was looking particularly beautiful. She was only twenty-seven yet, slender and dark, with large brown tragic eyes. She held herself proudly and greeted Anne in a queenly fashion, though her smile held all the insinuations of many years' intimacy. She had grown stately since her accession; somewhat removed, distant. Anne, irritatedly aware of the unenthusiastic atmosphere of the ball, was annoyed by this.

She was tired and worried. The other day her old tutor, Henry Compton, the Bishop of London, had been suspended because he refused to reprimand a clergyman who had preached against Popery. The King had set up a High Commission, with, of course, Sunderland and Jeffreys on the board, to try, apparently, churchmen who faithfully stayed by their religion and preached the English faith to their flock. More recently still, two judges had been dismissed and replaced by Catholics, and in the army Catholics were being given commissions, scores daily. She sighed, and found herself standing by

Dorset, who kissed her hand. She was glad to see him. He represented a past happy time to her.

"You sigh, Highness?"

"It is as though I were compassed about by many troubles," said Anne, and she remembered, too, how delicate was her eldest child, and her disappointment that the last, born in the summer, was a girl. Godolphin and Mulgrave came up, and joined them. Mulgrave had come back soon after her marriage. They had not met often, for he had his duties, but his past had been forgiven now Anne was married and the King had singled him out for favour, though he was a Protestant. He kissed Anne's hand and she looked at him affectionately. If her heart quickened she did not know it; she was in no mood to think of love or lovers.

They all began to discuss general matters a little superficially. Politics lay too heavily on their hearts to speak of freely at first. Mulgrave told how he had been lately to Blackheath and seen a trial of a new kind of war-engine called a Bomb which was shot out of a mortar piece. It could be cast for an enormous distance and completely destroyed men or machine on the place where it fell. It made a thunderous noise too.

"Devilish pieces," growled Dorset. "What is war coming to? There used to be honour among soldiers."

Mulgrave laughed and said that the soldiery were trying to catch up with the killing spirit of the civil citizen now.

"We soldiers at least don't hold Assizes."

"Hush, my lord," said Godolphin, looking around alarmed and casting an eye on Anne. But Anne appeared to be occupied with the catch of her fan.

"There's Master Evelyn," said Godolphin, relieved,

the next moment, "and I must speak to him. The pollards all about my lodge at Windsor are rotting. Wise man, he'll know what to advise."

He bowed to Anne, asked her permission to retire and hurried away to the grave, white-haired old man who was observing the ball with detachment, the other side of the room.

The other three stood silent a few minutes, watching the dancing. Anne did not wish to dance except with George, she said, and he had retired to some part of the Palace where he could find some soldierly companions and some wine. The King had long since given up the attempt to reform his hulking son-in-law. Anne bowed and smiled continually, now to the Countess of Sutherland, whom she disliked, now to Master Verrio the painter, in whose garden, full of sweet flowers, she sometimes walked with her elder daughter; to the Duke of Northumberland, so like his father the late King; to Father Petre, the King's Catholic favourite whom Sunderland was using to pull his chestnuts out of the fire; to a dozen Catholic peers and their wives and daughters, rejoicing in a new popularity which they mistrusted as much as anyone else.

Dorset asked her if she had heard the new singer, Cifaccio the eunuch. Anne said his voice was very sweet and clear. "He is to sing in the new chapel here." Everything came round to the same subject. The new chapel was to be a popish chapel, magnificently done up. There the King was to hold his Romish services, shamelessly expose his ridiculous sprinklings and dippings and criss-crossings to the people.

"Have you heard news from France?" asked Anne, following all their thoughts.

"More tortures, more persecutions," said Dorset

in a low voice. "I supped yesterday with the Countess of Rochester and there met a lady—her boy married Halifax's daughter—just over from France. They are killing them by the thousands, no Protestant is safe. Day by day they fly, children carried by their mothers, old people pulled along in carts—all to the coast. They think they can find a refuge here. She said the King does not know what is going on. Louis, I mean. They keep much of the persecution from him. The Dauphin knows, but he is afraid of his father and will not speak."

"I have heard it said," said Mulgrave, "that our friend Petre and our friend Sunderland would as freely tolerate Protestants were England Catholic as they tolerate Catholics now England is—still we hope—Protestant."

"The Catholics know no toleration," said Dorset shortly. "They cannot tolerate. There was an Edict of Nantes . . ."

"That was the work of the widow Scarron," said Mulgrave. "Kings' friends are cruel rulers."

"You are not yet a Papist, my lord?" asked Anne, smiling a little. Mulgrave still talked in the old way.

"Father Petre came to me the other day, Highness," said Mulgrave, playing with a ringlet lying on his shoulder. "He said, 'You will allow that all of us will be saved?' He had been sent to try me, you understand. 'Saved?' I said to him, 'I believe you will all be damned to a man.' And off he went, bundling up his black skirts."

The others laughed. "Hold your faith and lose your post," said Dorset. "They say the Treasurer now . . . has held his faith too long. The Treasurership is too good a post for a Protestant. He'll scarcely last out the year, or his brother in Ireland. Tyrconnell

has been sent over there—there's a Papist will harry our Protestant friend over the water to our own island."

The two lords were ever glancing around over their shoulders over Anne's head as they spoke. The noise of the dancers and the other guests drowned their speech. The candles were burning low. Outside the light of the bonfires flared up at intervals. The crowds in the streets were not shouting much. Festivities everywhere were half-hearted. In the gallery at the end of the room the musicians were playing energetically still, their faces shining from exertion and the heat of the room.

"Princess," said Mulgrave suddenly, gravely, "if the King's son spoke in France they say thousands would have relief. A child is heard where a friend is frowned upon. The country knows the love his Majesty had for you. You know the love we have for you and for him. Highness,—forgive me if I am presumptuous,—tell your father what his friends are doing. I am frightened, I swear, whether the people will long bear what they are bearing now. I am watching, listening all day and night and I'll give my life for him if he asks it. But there's no one to say to him . . . to show him . . . what they are saying all around. Except you."

Anne did not look at the two men, but she felt them watching her face. She had known this would come, this appeal. She felt cornered, in the wrong. What could she do but say she would help them? She represented, it seemed, the hope of a patient, suffering Protestant land. Yet she had not been educated for heroism. She could not explain—how could they understand?—the dumbness which overtook her when she was with her father. A dumbness which arose half from fear of that concealed burning fanatic cruelty of his, half from a strange personal disgust of him.

Yet now with the memory of her staunch old tutor disgraced and insulted, of those pitiful processions of French fugitives, of the idols and hooded monks and stakes with their bound martyrs, she felt a surge of courage. On top of an old conviction of impotence she clapped resolution. "I will do what I can, my lords."

She held out her hand. They kissed it and withdrew.

The ball was coming to an end. She made her way to the King's seat. James's face lighted up as he saw her. As she drew near her resolution began to flow away like loose sand between half-opened fingers.

"You are anxious," said the King. "The little one is ailing again?"

There was no one near, she could speak now. The King had taken her hand, and was waiting full of anxiety for her answer. She *must* make a beginning. . . .

"Sire, my old tutor, to whom I owe so much . . ."

The King's face changed. He put her hand away. "I will not hear a word about that man. This is a matter I can understand better than you. That man held the minds of my children, had the guidance of their bodies and souls when I was helpless. Then I did not know his quality. Now I do. That is all. I shall not speak about him and neither shall you. Let me hear no more of this subject."

The impediment in his speech almost disappeared when he was angry. His eyes narrowed. The downward lines in his face grew deeper and crueller. His determination and anger were like a great wall cutting him off from the world. Anne was terribly frightened and hated him more because he was wrong and ugly and yet could frighten her. She curtsied, withdrew. Her head was aching. She had failed someone—many people. She did not know what to do, how to

explain. She should have said more, spoken in a different fashion.

As she walked out of the door and down the great stairs between the linkmen she had to press her lips together to keep from sobbing. George was waiting for her by the great doorway. He was drunk, but she took his arm almost passionately. He, not at all sensing her failure and her distress, smiled at her and mumbled French besottedly, "Ma petite femme, ma p'tite femme." Lovingly he handed her into her chair and clicked the door after her.

At Christmas George fell ill of a fever. The great clumsy Danish trooper had no resistance in illness ; he lay on his bed tossing, crying out, weeping, while Anne held his hand or trotted back and forth with physics, milk, and wine. Sickness in those dependent on her was a new kind of trouble ; by one fresh experience after another she was being forced up into a maturity for which she was not ready. Underneath this assumed capacity lay imprisoned childlike fear and vanity, struggling for an opportunity to escape, pushing upwards like prisoners beneath a floor. Now she had forgotten the existence of such feelings.

Anne would not surrender her duties to another. She could not trust anyone not to neglect George. Every journey she made for him, every sleepless night she spent beside him made him more important to her. Imagining him, for a moment, removed from her world, she trembled. Something essential, some stable measuring rod, would be lost with George, and more than this, some capacity for affection, irrational, undemanding affection would be lost from her own nature.

Great clumsy thing, he lay in bed, his long face crimson

with fever, his head larger and uglier than ever, now it was bereft of his wig, which hung vacantly on the holder by his dressing-table. The huge tester shook all its fringes as he tossed. The great silken coverlet lay in a mountain on the floor where he had kicked it in frenzy. All the windows of his room were closed tight. The air was close and unpleasant.

The doctors bled him, ordered purgatives and quiet and told Anne to rest herself. But Anne could not rest. As the days went on, the medicine bottles accumulated, she grew more restless, more despairing, more loving. No one could help her now—not even Mrs. Freeman. About February, however, the fever abated. George, strangely weak, affectionate and sleepy, began to sit up in bed and talk with his old spirit. He was particularly grateful to Anne, followed her about with his eyes and pleaded with her to rest herself.

Then, a few days before Anne's twenty-first birthday, the younger child, Anne Sophia, fell ill. The little girl had always been sturdy. There had never been any fears for her the whole of her six months of life. Anne left her husband and devoted herself to the child, her heart contracted with fear. The baby did not sicken gradually; it sank quickly into danger and died on its mother's birthday. Before the end of the same day, the elder girl, always delicate, had died too.

The ladies-in-waiting tried to make Anne rest or take some wine. She only shook her head and smiled at them uncertainly. Both gone, both children gone. She had been the mother of two children; there had been a family here, a family at the Cockpit; there had been young Stuart children growing up in this house—they had all died. None of the children she had borne had lived. There was terror in her mind. There was

silence where there had been voices and cries ; a very still silence from the two carved and gilded cradles.

The children did not need her any longer. She went back to George, weakened again by her neglect and the trouble which had fallen on them. He had had a clumsy pride in his children, had been waiting so patiently till they grew old enough to understand all the important things he had to tell them.

Anne tended him again with every gentleness, and when his wants were supplied would sit beside his bed and take his hand. Together they wept quietly, or tried to comfort each other, and then remembering some day which had past when they had been happy and proud, they would weep again.

VII

DURING the winter the Catholic menace made greater headway than ever. Priests walked undaunted in the streets ; the Papal Nuncio had been publicly received ; Rochester was dismissed, Clarendon recalled from Ireland—the last strongholds of Protestantism these two. Either by violence or craft, Popery was making its way over the country ; the Protestants left in office were stranded without friends or favour, high and dry like rocks after the tide recedes.

Anne felt desperately alone. The King had never spoken violently to her on the subject of religion, but she only felt that he was withholding pressure so that he might apply it at some time when she would be defenceless. She seldom argued from experience, nor in her panic did she pause now to consider whether such a deed was consistent with his nature as she knew it. She did not clearly know what she did fear ; simply dangers seemed to pile up before and behind. Confusedly she wondered to herself, would she have the courage to die for her faith if need be at the end ? . . . The thought of being put to that test terrified her.

There was one hope. The King must die some day. His reign must come to an end. Could it come more precipitately to an end than he imagined ? Anne became aware, very slightly aware, that her brother-in-law in Holland was making close inquiries about affairs in England. She did not quite understand what was going on, what was written in those letters which were exchanged, it was said, between William and certain gentlemen of high standing in England. She did not wish to have the matter explained. It shocked her horribly to face subversive propositions. The monarchy

was divine. But she was glad to know that somewhere, not too far off, there was a force which stood for Protestantism, which could demand and, if necessary, reinforce its demands. She did not care to identify herself with any such force, but she was glad to know it existed, and to know, too, that her sister was associated with it. The letters of the two sisters, hitherto confined to gossip and family notes, took on a slightly political tint.

And all the while Mrs. Freeman spent the hours with her mistress bemoaning the sad state of affairs, throwing in a word here and there for the good old days when monarchs were true defenders of the faith, and declaring, though vaguely, that things must not be allowed to go too far.

In the spring M. Dyckvelt was sent over as Ambassador by William. He conferred with the disgruntled nobility rather more than James thought necessary. He had an audience with Anne too. They talked religion in a large way and said nothing particular. He asked keenly whether she held by the Protestant faith. Anne made a fervent assent.

Dyckvelt's presence created a stir. Various peers who had been depressed for months came to life during his stay in England. Men who had been long out of power and those recently displaced sought him out, and sought out Lord Churchill, who seemed to be in his confidence. Anne used to observe groups of peers, Danby, Nottingham and Halifax, Devonshire, the Bishop of London and her uncle Rochester himself, slipping into Churchill's apartments in Whitehall to those long and almost clandestine conferences at which Sarah hinted.

In the spring the King issued a Declaration of Indul-

gence to dissenters and Catholics who had been imprisoned for preaching their faith. All over the country, wan, pale priests and pastors returned to their flocks; the churches emptied suddenly and the nonconforming congregations returned to their own places of worship. To Anne this was the last offence. The King had wounded the church by loosing Popery; now he attacked it from the other side by freeing nonconformists. The Church of England was surrounded by its enemies.

Still she did not commit herself to any subversive opinions. She had yet not allied herself with those mysterious activities her brother-in-law had set on foot; she had not even fully opened her understanding to the nature of those activities. But in May, James ordered William to recall Dyckvelt, and before the Ambassador left, Churchill waited on Anne and begged her to send some message which the envoy could carry back to William.

He talked earnestly to her for a while; told her her sister was anxious for her; there were such strange stories spread about of what went on in England, of the fresh proselytes to the Catholic religion for instance. Those of the true faith must stand together, make known themselves to the others, so that in times of trouble, which God avert, they could show their enemies a united front. And he said much more while they sat alone together in the dusk in Anne's closet; and when Dyckvelt returned to The Hague he carried a letter to his master from Lord Churchill:

“ Sir,

“ The Princess of Denmark having ordered me to discourse with Mons. Dyckfelt, and to let him know

her resolutions, so that he might let your Highness and the Princess, her sister, know that she was resolved by the assistance of God to suffer all extremities, even unto death itself, rather than be brought to change her religion, I thought it my duty to your Highness and the Princess Royal, by this opportunity of Mons. Dyckvelt, to give you assurances under my own hand that my places and the King's favour I set at nought, in comparison of the being true to my religion. In all things but this the King may command me ; and I call God to witness that even with joy I should expose my life for his service, so sensible am I of his favours. I know the troubling you, Sir, with thus much of myself, I being of so little use to your Highness, is very impertinent ; but that I think it may be a great ease to your Highness and the Princess to be satisfied that the Princess of Denmark is safe in the trusting of me, I being resolved, although I cannot live the life of a saint, if there be occasion for it, to show the resolution of a martyr."

Towards the end of the year something occurred which increased Anne's bitterness towards her father. She was for the second time obliged to ask him to pay her debts. James had been extraordinarily generous to her. Her allowance had been raised to £32,000. The Christmas before he had asked her whether she was worried about her affairs, and though Rochester and Godolphin had grumbled that the Treasury had claims upon it more pressing than Anne's gambling debts, the King had insisted on making her an extra present of money. Anne was under many obligations to her father ; the knowledge irked her. Anne loved pomp ; he had seen to it that the Cockpit was as perfect a miniature Court as could be allowed outside his own.

She loved a crowd of attendants ; so she had her own guards, besides the full complement of gentlemen, ladies, pages, stewards, and other minor officials.

She was to be treated, he commanded, with almost as much respect as the Sovereign himself. Even in chapel Dr. Tennison, the chaplain, was to make his three *congés* to the Princess as though she were the monarch.

Everything he could do, her father did to win Anne to him. He could not imagine there was anything he could not do for her, or that she would fail to be drawn closer to him by his fulfilling all her wishes. If he supplied her with all the comfort, all the money, which a young woman must enjoy, then his daughter must be affectionate and happy.

But Anne, woven into the mesh of family affection by these kindnesses, felt merely uncomfortable. Though she never faced the future, never argued out to herself the fulfilment of her wishes where her father was concerned, she felt dimly that in receiving these favours from him she was putting herself into a questionable position. And because she felt herself put in the wrong her resentment against him grew great within her.

Somehow the money did go. Anne, not personally extravagant, worried about it a little ; but it was hard to run a small palace inexpensively. There were commissions here and perquisites there ; a boy needed for the back stairs, an older boy to supervise that one ; or she was to have her picture painted for Mary, or they must entertain an ambassador. And alongside of this there were always the expenses of the basset table. Anne had to play basset ; when politics were worrying her and the burden of living among such tangled anxieties lay too heavily upon her, she could only resort to the card table, and there with Lady Churchill and the

others she would play her favourite game with tremendous earnestness and abstraction. Anne could not play cards well ; she played slowly and very badly and she lost £30 to £60 a night.

Whatever the cause, at the end of the year she found herself £7,000 in debt. She had more hope, however, of getting the money from her father since Rochester had been dismissed. Her uncle was always ready with a reproving word, and besides he disapproved of Lady Churchill and had hinted once or twice that Anne was too weak or generous and that her dependents knew it.

Anne wrote to her father and asked him for the £7,000. The next day, as she and Sarah and Mrs. Fitzharding were sitting down to play in her room, the King was suddenly announced. He had, of course, come to discuss her note, and it was plain that he would not care for the presence of Lady Churchill and the two other ladies who had received, directly or indirectly, so much of the money he had lavished on his daughter.

Lady Churchill was impish that day. "There's no time to retreat, Highness, we'll enclose ourselves here," and with that she opened the door of the large closet and whisked herself and Lady Fitzharding inside. Anne just had time to compose her face before her father came in.

James looked tired and uncomfortable. Anne rose and curtsied, offered him a chair. He sat down, picked up a book, glanced at it, put it down on the table again and ran his thumb about the George which hung round his neck. He was searching in his mind how to make an appeal—more than an appeal for economy. Anne sat motionless opposite, watching him. Hardness was behind her eyes, and fear too, though he could never see it. There were two allies in the cupboard and

she would not care to see the King's face if a move betrayed them and he strode to the door and flung it open. Anne waited, frightened and angry because of her fear.

The King looked up. He seemed to be starting on some other subject than money ; then he stopped himself.

"I have made you a noble allowance, my dear child," he said finally. "I have twice cheerfully paid your debts without one word of remonstrance, but now I am convinced that you have someone about you for whose sake you are plunging yourself into inconvenience. I am willing to relieve you of these once more ; but must observe a more exact economy for the future."

It was too hard. The world was too difficult—and now this gentleness and reproach seemed to heap all her trouble into a wave which rose over her and came down, breaking her resistance. Anne began to sob. Self-pity and fear and perplexity stifled her, drew her tears. Like a child she laid her head on her arms, sobbing. The King rose, came round to her, hesitated and finally went out, closing the door softly behind him.

As the door clicked, the closet opened. Sarah and Lady Fitzharding ran out, laughing. Anne, ashamed of her tears, pretended to be shuffling the deck of cards. The two went to a mirror, patted their hair, straightened their laces. They did not see Anne's distress. They were laughing and chattering. They spoke of the difficulty of getting the money from the King, and condoled with the Princess on his severity. No one had suspected he would make this trouble.

"It's all owing to that old rascal your uncle," declared Lady Churchill roundly.

Anne felt that she was caught in a net. She was

bound by prohibitions ; she was ever being caught in the wrong like some schoolchild. She and Sarah had to suffer constant reproach ; they had to live secretly, it seemed, in order to avoid the watchful eyes of Sunderlands or Godolphins or Hydes who lurked in the antechamber of the King for the special purpose of whining about some petty expenditure at the Cockpit establishment. There was no room for her.

Yet she had ambitions. Sarah year by year grew more sage and statesmanlike ; the two talked a great deal together of the things they might do, the rough ways they could make smooth, had they the country before them unencumbered with scheming and self-seeking ministers. There would come a time when she, Anne, would live unhampered by the restrictions that hedged her round now. Sarah had predicted this long ago. The time would come when she would be out of reach of humiliating reproaches. In that time she would befriend the people she ruled, would dispense justice and govern the land according to the laws of the Church and the old traditions of England. And she would hand on to her sons (she and Mrs. Freeman having grown old together) the only law that England needed : Honour the Church and Serve the King. By this dream Anne lived.

Meanwhile she relieved her feelings by writing to her sister about the offending ministers :

“ Lord Clarendon, as to his own affairs ” (she wrote), “ has been a very ill manager, which I cannot help being sorry for on my mother’s account ; as for himself, he has not behaved himself so well to me as I think he has reason nor no more indeed has any of that family, which one may think a little extraordinary.

“ You may remember, I have once before ventured to tell you that I thought Lord Sunderland a very ill man, and I am more confirmed every day in that opinion. Everybody knows how often this man turned backwards and forwards in the late King’s time ; and now, to complete all his virtues, he is working with all his might to bring in Popery. He is perpetually with the priests, and stirs up the King to do things faster than I believe he would of himself. Things are come to that pass now, that if they go on for much longer, I believe, in a little while, no Protestant will be able to live here.

“ The King has never said a word to me about religion since the time I told you of ; but I expect every minute and am resolved to undergo any thing rather than change my religion. Nay if it should come to such extremities, I will chuse to live on alms rather than change.

“ This worthy Lord (Sunderland) does not go publicly to mass, but hears it privately at a priest’s chambers and never lets any body be there, but a servant of his.

“ His lady too, is an extraordinary in her kind ; for she is a flattering, dissembling woman ; but she has so fawning and endearing a way that she will deceive any body at first and it is not possible to find out all her ways in a little time. She will cheat, though it be for a little. Then she has had her gallants, though may be not so many as some ladies here ; and with all these good qualities, she is a constant churchwoman. . . .”

and later :

“ Sure here never was a couple so well matched as she and her good husband ; for as she is throughout in all her actions the greatest jade that ever was, so is he the subtillest workingest villain, that is on the face of the earth.”

At the opening of the year 1688 came news which struck Anne's hopes to the ground. Every sacrifice was rendered sterile, every hardship endured for the future's sake was made a mockery; after six years' interval the Queen was pregnant again.

Anne's thoughts charged furiously through her head when she heard the news. If the child was a boy—then the news could not be true. She could only think it was not true. If there was to be an heir, the whole theme of her life would be destroyed, her existence rendered meaningless. She had not realised how her eventual accession to the throne had become the key to her life. Only a few years ago there had been scarcely a prospect of her succession. But since the vision had become a possibility, then a probability, she had begun to live by it. The desire for power, of which she had been balked, it seemed, ever since childhood, could only be satisfied by dreams of a throne some day.

The frustration of her desire made Anne madly angry. She was furious with the Queen, with her father. She could have stamped her feet, screamed, and torn with her nails at the hangings on the walls. Her mind was filled with dark thoughts which almost surprised her by their malice. What could she do? Again and again her mind came back to one notion—the news could not be true; *not if the child was a boy, an heir*. And Mrs. Freeman, watching her, soothing her, said they must watch carefully everything that went on. Indeed if it were a boy (and it was said all about that the Queen could not bear sons) it would be a strange business. . . .

All that winter and spring, Anne bit her fingers and wrote to her sister in Holland about the Queen's condition.

Though Anne and her stepmother had practically

grown up together—for Mary of Modena was only fifteen when James brought her to his daughters saying, “Here is a companion for you”—Anne had forgotten their old friendship during the past two or three years. Her affections had never deeply fastened themselves on Mary; she retained her childish suspicions of the foreign Papist princess. She had not the intuition to see through Mary’s reserve into the loneliness beneath; besides, Mary’s grace and beauty made her feel clumsy. Now her irritation turned to antagonism. She seized on every excuse for hatred and worked it over in her mind. And Mary, sensing enmity, withdrew deeper into her reserve. There was no more gossip in the Queen’s closet. No more maternal experiences were exchanged between the two girls who had grown up like sisters. Anne, curious, full of questions which seemed to her must be quite in place as from one young matron to another, found herself ever so slightly rebuffed. Mary did not want to discuss the coming event, her health and hopes, as she had discussed previous events of the kind. Anne found in these rebuffs an excellent justification for her animosity. If it was not unkindness that caused this misplaced modesty of Mary’s, what was it? Secretiveness? “For look,” said Anne bitterly to Sarah and her sister, “at the people in whom she does confide, people like Lady Sunderland.”

“I cannot help thinking Mansell’s Wife’s” (so Anne referred to the Queen in writing to her sister) “great belly is a little suspicious. It is true, indeed, she is very big, but she looks better than ever she did, which is not usual. . . . Her being so positive it will be a son, and the principles of that religion being such, that they will stick at nothing, be it never so wicked, if it will promote

their interest, give some cause to fear there may be foul play intended. I will do all I can to find out if it be so."

There was a great deal to occupy Anne's attention during the spring of 1688. James had issued his second Declaration of Indulgence ; this opened all appointments, civil and military, to Catholics and dissenters, but it was obviously designed for the glorification of the Catholics. There was a murmur of protest from the country, now beginning to be articulate, and seven staunch Anglican bishops petitioned the King against the Declaration. It was the country against one man, a man who had no longer a clan to support him. There were no stalwart male Stuarts left to carry on, one after another, the doctrine of the divine right of Catholic kings. So considered earnest citizens, struggling between their natural inclination of obedience to God's Anointed and a strange instinctive yearning for constitutional justice. Perhaps there was a chance to bar the way to any more illegalities. Family support means a great deal, even to a king.

Then, in the midst of the tumult, just a month earlier than had been expected, the Queen bore another child. It was another male Stuart, an heir. And as though he had renewed his youth, the King took fresh courage, denounced the bishops, prosecuted them for libel and had them taken to the Tower. He ordered bonfires in the streets and prayers of thanksgiving in the churches in honour of his son—but the prayers were repeated listlessly and no one joined in the responses, while along the Strand and Fleet Street the crowds, fiercely articulate now, roared and cheered and threw flowers on the seven venerable martyr bishops as they were carried to the Tower to await their trial.

James, reviewing his troops at Hounslow the day of the trial, heard a crash of cheering, and asked its meaning.

"It is nothing," said Feversham the French general, "but the joy of the soldiers at the discharge of the bishops."

"Do you call that nothing?" asked the King.

VIII

ANNE was in Bath when the child was born, but she hurried back to glean any details she could hear of the actual birth. Mary, more cautious than herself, had insisted on detailed evidence before she would fall in with Anne's suspicions, or give full ear to the tale now going about that the child had been slipped into the Queen's bed in a warming-pan. Anne button-holed nurses, ladies in waiting, sent Sarah a-spying to find out all she could about the lying-in.

All these spyings-out had to be made secretly. The King must not suspect. He came to see Anne every day full of talk about the infant and he expected her to be as much interested in its health as he was himself. He imagined her to be happy over the birth of a child who had disinherited both her and her unborn children !

The King disgusted her more than ever in his new rôle of father to an heir. He seemed an old man. Sentimental old bigot ; old father of a little Catholic interloper, he was stupidly unconscious that no one accepted this child as his. He was impregnable in his belief that everyone, his family particularly, was congratulating him and the Queen on their achievement. He felt sure they all loved him and each other as much as he loved any of them. The Lord had been good ; and now the work for the Church would go on faster and faster, and at the end even his children might see the light. He spoke tentatively to Anne about religion once or twice and brought her books, suggesting that she might care to look over them.

Anne, stricken with dumbness and embarrassment when with her father, said nothing. She smiled,

pretended to agree with him and said nothing when he spoke of religion. Her dislike sealed her mouth. She felt dimly that if anyone should check the King in his course of tyranny now, the chance of salvation might be lessened. It was important that he should do his worst, then they would turn a corner and something would happen. She herself would be a little to one side when the crash came. Meanwhile she must try to keep safe, while the madness lasted. She *must* preserve herself till rescue came. Any moment she might be betrayed. She must smile and be quiet with her father, back away from him, keep him off, unsuspecting. . . .

For as the summer passed, Anne saw with some dismay that it was going to become increasingly difficult for her to remain in ignorance of affairs in Holland. Nearly everyone was trying, more or less disingenuously, to copy her attitude. Half a dozen of the most important nobles had, as nearly everyone knew, practically invited the Prince of Orange to invade England. His Tory supporters hedged a little ; they merely wished him to appear as a champion of the Constitution of England, put things to rights and disappear. The Whigs, heretical as usual, mumbling their quotations from Locke, said the contract between King and people had been broken and the guilty party must go. Meanwhile the King wrote affectionate letters to his son-in-law, who answered as affectionately ; the discontented lords gathered cheerfully at Court and did their homage, while across the Channel the Dutch fleets massed together, fully provisioned. In Whitehall, conversationally, the fleets were preparing for some affair with France. Grimly the King joined in the game of deception.

By late summer the Churchills, who with Anne and George made up a quartette that was seldom broken,

were quietly discussing the invasion of the Orangemen as though Anne had taken the matter for granted for months past. It was obvious that the Churchills had faced the issue long since. Day by day through the home park at Windsor, little Harriet Churchill running ahead to throw crusts to the deer, the four would pace slowly abreast, while Churchill in his quiet, pleasant voice would tell the need of the Protestants to hold together. Not only here, he would say, staring out across the wooded country to where the college of Eton lifted its spires, grey among the green, not only here, but all over Europe. It was more than a handful of clerics in England against another handful. It was the Protestant churches of the world joining hands, England and Holland and Scandinavia against the creeping consuming tide of Catholic tyranny. Where Catholic met Catholic there were allies. You couldn't expect the King, allied though he was by blood and treaty to the Prince of Orange, to turn his back for long on Louis, his brother in religion. For the matter of that, was his back turned very sturdily now?

At Windsor, at the Wells, at Bath, at the Cockpit—everywhere the same four were together and always they discussed these matters. Whenever Anne hesitated the Churchills had some word, so pat, so reasonable, that her doubts were cleared. If George shook his head over some military point—how could a small invading army contend against those soldiers eating their heads off at Hounslow?—again Churchill had been over the ground and could resolve his difficulty. Autumn had scarcely begun when Anne, without ever having allowed to herself that she had joined a party of action, was as deeply engaged in the conspiracy against her father as her brother-in-law himself.

As soon as Anne returned to the Cockpit, in the autumn, her uncle Clarendon waited upon her. She rather hoped he might prove an ally, but she had reckoned without his stern loyalty. He had suffered from his King, but he was still prepared to stand by him, and Anne, after a few tentative questions, discovered his sympathies and withdrew quickly into silence. Her uncle, however, was not inclined to leave matters thus. He had come to appeal to her to help him. He wanted her to speak to her father. Anne would not commit herself. He asked her what she knew of the unspeakable gossip about the Prince of Wales, about the Dutch fleets, about the talk of disturbances. She had always been frightened of Lord Clarendon ; now with his large, protruding eyes fixed upon her she felt guilty and petulant. She would say nothing. "I know nothing except what the Prince, my husband, tells me he has heard." But her uncle, she could see, did not believe her. She did not know how much he knew, but whatever he did know disgusted him. Nevertheless he continued to call on her. He came every day, and every day she managed to avoid a private talk with him, putting him off with the promise of an appointment later. She was terrified that he would reproach her, terrified that he would tell her father what he guessed about her. She had managed to keep herself safely hidden so far, but she was living on the edge of a precipice, threatened by a shameful exposure every hour, till her brother-in-law came and delivered her into safety.

Her uncle managed to see her one day alone. He told her he was surprised and shocked when he had called before to find her speak so slightly regarding her family affairs, and to allow her ladies to jest about the birth of her brother.

"Sure," said Anne, "you cannot but hear the common rumours concerning him?"

"I do hear very strange rumours indeed," replied Lord Clarendon gravely, "as everyone must do who lives publicly in the world, but there is no colour for these."

Anne said petulantly she did not say she believed them, but she needs must say that the Queen's behaviour was very odd.

"Possibly," said Clarendon, "the Queen did not know the reports."

"I am sure," answered the Princess, growing desperate, "the King knew of them, for as he has been sitting by me in my chamber, he would speak of the idle stories that were given out of the Queen not being likely to have a child, laughing at them; therefore I cannot wonder that there was no more care to satisfy the world."

But Clarendon was not satisfied. Had she told the King of these reports then, he asked, and why not? And when Anne said, almost frightened to tears, that the King would have been angry to have heard them, he told her she should have asked her friends to serve her in the matter.

"Remember," he continued, "this is the first time you have said anything to me, although I have given you occasion to open your mind, by urging your speaking to the King your father since these alarms of invasion." He begged her to do something to prove to the world that the Prince was no spurious child. But Anne said nothing and looked sullenly at her fan.

He must have said something of his suspicions to her father, for the next day the members of the Privy Council waited on her with copies of the depositions of witnesses concerning the birth of the Prince. Anne received

them coldly and remarked, "My lords, this was not necessary ; for I have so much duty for the King that his word is more to me than all these depositions."

"I hope," said Lord Clarendon after this ceremony, "there now remains no suspicion with your Royal Highness."

Anne looked away from him and said nothing. She nursed her hate and rejoiced to herself remembering how only a few days ago his eldest son, Cornbury, had written to William of Orange pledging his support and promising to lead over three regiments as soon as the Dutch landed in England.

Like a child shivering under a hedge while a thunder-storm passes overhead, Anne crouched under the Churchills' protection and waited blindly till the upheaval came which should end her apprehensions. She no longer stopped to reason about her chances of safety should the invasion fail. She only wanted to leap the chasm of the next few weeks to the security ahead. The air was full of imminent happenings ; it was hard to keep sane day by day. If she thought over what was happening, used her judgment on passing events, she grew more frightened still.

She was deep in deceit. She had even allowed it to be believed that she was pregnant again. This subterfuge helped in various ways ; she was not, for instance, expected to be so much at Court. Lady Churchill had entire control of her. Whatever she advised Anne did, unquestioningly. Even when she brought in a carpenter to construct a little staircase from Anne's closet down to the park, Anne looked on satisfied and incurious and asked no questions.

There was a strange feeling abroad. Solemn groups

of people talked at street corners. Messengers arrived hourly at Whitehall. Military men had audience of the King, came out from the Palace tucking warrants and orders into their belts. Companies of cavalry clattered through the streets, bound for no one knew where. The Protestants were up again; James had dismissed Petre and Sunderland. The liberties of the towns were being restored. Catholics were being removed from office. Concessions which a few months ago would have set the country rejoicing passed unnoticed.

The Prince of Orange had distributed an address to the people of England. He said he had been invited by the peers of England to help his wife's country. He was coming to protect the liberties of England, to secure the Protestant Church, to re-establish ancient laws. He mentioned the suspicions of the Prince's birth. He promised that he threatened no invasion, he was coming only to enforce the wishes of the people of England.

And the people of England, staring over each other's shoulders at secret forbidden copies of the address, snatching at smudgy news bulletins, were too pre-occupied to notice that their King was coaxing them with concessions, begging their mercy. They had turned their faces elsewhere for salvation.

On October 19th came news that the Prince's Dutch Fleet had set sail from The Hague; fireships, frigates, men of war, and transports were on their way across the Channel; there was no pretence now of a war with France. Yet they had not got half-way across when they were dispersed by a gale. The wind had turned Papist, as James said when they brought him the news. His brow relaxed somewhat and he set about revoking some of the concessions he had made so precipitately. Now

in the streets men took off their hats, stood for a while to feel how the wind was blowing ; everyone passing a church or large house slowed down and glanced up at the weathercock. Prentices whistled answering each other with a refrain from " Lillibullero :

" O but why does he stay behind,
By my soul 'tis a Protestant wind."

Every morning when Anne rose she went to the window to see which way the wind bent the topmost branches in St. James's Park. Her mind in its bewilderment and terror fastened itself absorbedly on each step of the course ; she shrank from facing the ultimate issue. Now she thought alone of the wind. All London, all England waited for the wind. James in Whitehall, interviewing his captains, writing to his admirals, praying in his new chapel, waited for the wind.

And at the beginning of November the wind blew easterly ; blew William's fleet down the Channel, past the cliffs of Dover, where thousands stood and waved as the heavy-sailed ships lunged by, blew it into Torbay harbour.

The next day, Lady Churchill, her chin trembling a little, came into Anne's closet and told her that Prince William of Orange had landed in England and was marching for Exeter. Anne smiled. She dared not speak ; there was still much to endure, still too much to fear. But her Mrs. Freeman went to the window and looked out, silently clasping and unclasping her hands.

For the next few days Anne lay on her couch, hidden away as far as possible from the excitement of the outer world. She understood now why Mrs. Freeman had

hinted that pregnancy would be a useful condition for her. Anne was an automaton now, obedient to the forces of which Lady Churchill was the mouthpiece. She gave Anne her instructions, then hurried about the Cockpit, in and out of rooms, giving advice to Colonel Berkeley, Anne's equerry, and Lady Fitzharding, who were both in the secret, and conferring with Lord Churchill and Archbishop Compton.

The King came in only for short visits. He was abstracted and harassed. He sat by Anne's couch stroking her hand, told her to comfort his wife while he was away with the troops and above all to guard her own health. Anne was taut and stiff with apprehension during his visits. She was too frightened to remember that should her plans succeed these visits would be the last she would ever see of him. When finally he kissed her good-bye before setting off for Windsor she only felt her body relax, free for a while from the constriction of terror. She never saw her father again after this farewell.

There was a quietness in Whitehall after the King had left, for the space of a day or two. Then came messenger after messenger. First telling that Cornbury had deserted; then that the King was advancing to Salisbury; then that the English troops were quarrelling with the Irish soldiery that James had imported to serve him. Treachery in high places was suspected. In these days Lady Churchill looked pale and Anne, however she clothed herself in insensibility, knew that it was only a matter of hours now for success or failure. Would the work be done before the plot was discovered?

At Salisbury the King harangued his troops, held a council of war. Lord Churchill and Lord Grafton were the first to swear eternal fidelity. In the Cockpit

Anne, with Lady Churchill at her elbow, wrote to her brother-in-law :

“THE COCKPIT,

“Having on all occasions given you and my sister all imaginable assurances of the real friendship and kindness I have for you both, I hope it is not necessary for me to repeat anything of that kind, and on the subject you have now wrote to me, I shall not trouble you with many compliments, only in short to assure you that you have my wishes for your good success in this so just undertaking ; and I hope the Prince will soon be with you to let you see his readiness to join with you, who, I am sure, will do you all the service that lies in his power. He went yesterday with the King towards Salisbury, intending to go from thence to you as soon as his friends thought proper.

“I am not certain if I shall continue here or remove into the city ; that shall depend upon the advice my friends will give me, but wherever I am, I shall be ready to show you how much I am your humble servant,

“ANNE.”

Then, as London waited for news of a battle between James waiting at Salisbury, and William's eastward marching troops, came the news that Lord Churchill, Lieutenant-General of the Army, the man whom soldiers followed to death, along with Prince George of Denmark, the Duke of Grafton and half a dozen other men of position, had deserted and ridden over to Axminster where lay William's army. They had only just ridden away in time. The night before, Feversham on his knees had implored the King to issue a warrant for Churchill's arrest.

Then came news that the King had started back for London : that the army was in retreat, and that Lady Churchill and Lady Fitzharding—some said the Princess—were to be put under arrest. Anne felt the waters of fear close over her head at last. She clung to Sarah and sobbed she could not meet the King, “I would rather jump out of that window than meet the King. . . .”

Again Lady Churchill soothed her. They had time. Everything was planned. She would be safe. She bade her write a letter to her stepmother, according as she was told. Anne sat down at her writing-table and as she wrote the words felt her fears ebb away again. How rightly Mrs. Freeman understood these things !

“ Madam,

“ I beg pardon if I am so deeply affected with the surprising news of the Prince’s being gone as not to be able to see you, but leave this paper to express my humble duty to the King and yourself, and to let you know that I am gone to absent myself, to avoid the King’s displeasure, which I am not able to bear, either against the Prince or myself, and I shall stay at so great a distance, as not to return till I hear the happiness of a reconciliation ; and, as I am confident the Prince did not leave the King with any other design than to use all possible means for his preservation, so I hope you will do me the justice to believe that I am incapable of following him for any other end. Never was anyone in such an unhappy condition so divided between duty to a father and a husband, and, therefore I know not what I must do, but to follow one to preserve the other.

“ I see the general falling off of the nobility and gentry who avow to have no other end than to prevail with the King to secure their religion, which they saw so

much in danger, from the violent councils of the priests, who to promote their own religion, did not care to what dangers they exposed the King. I am fully persuaded that the Prince of Orange designs the King's safety and preservation and hope all things may be composed without bloodshed by the calling of a Parliament.

"God grant an happy ending to these troubles, and that the King's reign may be prosperous, and that I shortly meet you in perfect peace and safety, till when, let me beg of you to continue the same favourable opinion that you have hitherto had of your most obedient daughter and servant,

"ANNE."

When she read over what she had written, Anne believed every word of it.

IX

ON Sunday night, November 6th, Anne retired to her room at the usual time. Her lady-in-waiting, Mrs. Danvers, was to sleep in the anteroom ; she knew nothing of the plot. For a while Anne tiptoed about her room ; looked in the mirror, touched her hair ; opened drawers and cupboards purposefully and closed them again. She was more exhilarated than frightened now, yet every noise made her stiffen up and pause, head cocked on one side. She read the letter to her stepmother, which was to lie on her toilet table, two or three times. She peeped through the curtains. It was a black night and the rain slashed down against the glass. She thought it would be cold outside.

She lay down on her bed, but could not rest. Her limbs jerked. She turned over wearily. Yet she was excited, almost happy. It was long since she had been able to take action. Now the long months of deception had rolled off, her spirits, released again, were high. Midnight struck. There was silence over the Palace. Far off came a clatter and jingle of cavalry moving down Whitehall. It died away.

She woke suddenly with the clock striking one. She rose and put on a light cloak, extinguished the candles and opened the window on to the little staircase Lady Churchill had had built some weeks before. Just below were two figures, Mrs. Freeman and Lady Fitzharding. They looked up. She could just distinguish the grey glimmer of their faces. Very carefully so as not to catch her heels in the wood steps, she descended the staircase and joined them. She took Lady Churchill's hand. "How warm your hands are," whispered Sarah.

Her own were wet and cold from the rain. "Lord Dorset is just by the corner."

They stepped over the mud of the Park. The rain had beaten the ground into a bog and it sucked at their shoes. The rain flattened Anne's hair and ran down her neck. It was intensely dark. After they had gone a few steps Dorset came forward. "The coach is but a little further on, Highness. Oh, this rain!" They stepped on, lifting their feet high. Anne kept tripping and clutching the arms of her companions. Suddenly the whole expedition seemed absurd. They were all breathing so heavily. She began to giggle to herself. Then she stepped into a deep well of mud. It came up over her ankle. She shrieked and pulled out her foot and waved it, leaning on Dorset's shoulder. Her shoe had come off. She felt she should not laugh, yet laughter broke from her. It was too much—too funny. She leant on Dorset, choking with laughter. Lady Churchill and Lady Fitzharding were growing alarmed and impatient. Dorset was not disturbed. He was behaving as though he were in the ballroom, was unhurried and conversational. Now he bent down, took off his leather gauntlet and drew it over her foot. "Permit me, Highness, as a protection against the wet." Anne, laughing, nodded, and hopped on towards the coach. They all climbed in. The coach jerked and started off, jangling away down the black streets around by Charing Cross, down the Strand to the Archbishop Compton's lodgings by St. Paul's.

Anne was not very clear as to what was happening during the next few days. She was flushed, in high spirits, and she laughed and chattered continually. The little party went from the city to Dorset's seat, Copt Hall, near Epping, and from there to Nottingham. Anne

took to her bed here, her blood was heated and her physician, Dr. Radcliffe, was sent for. But he would not come to attend a rebel princess ; said so gruffly to the messenger. After a day or so Anne rose, a little shakily, from her bed. There was business to be attended to.

The house was crowded with people. Young soldiers, country squires, officers, local peers assembled about the place, talking, disputing, exchanging rumours. It was said that James was back in London, where he had been received with acclamations. There was talk of a royal counter-attack, of Popish risings, ambushes. Anne, harassed and rather ill at ease again, turned for advice to Lord Chesterfield, whom she had known since she was a child. He had attended her as soon as she arrived in Nottingham, but his countenance was sour and he was not apparently inclined to congratulate her. Anne asked him to provide her with an escort to Warwick and to appoint a council to advise and protect her. Chesterfield replied rather brusquely that he had been a privy councillor of her father's and he did not care to become a member of a council for the ordering of troops to be used against his master. Nevertheless he undertook to defend her himself against dangers arising from the disorders in the countryside. She was not safe from reproof yet. She was still to be put in the wrong. The rebuff made her more voluble, her behaviour less controlled. They rode on to Leicester, collecting a sprinkling of country folk and troopers as they went, and Anne waved excitedly to the crowds of labourers and peasants who lined the road to cheer the cavalcade.

She was curiously fevered. Her returning fears mingled with the intoxication of her week of adventure. She was hectic, searched here and there for applause

and praise. To everyone who came near she poured out the story of her tribulations ; she felt a need to justify herself. Her father's weary reproaches became persecutions ; her own deceit was transmuted to suffering under threats. The quiet Cockpit became a house besieged by Papist spies. Soon she believed her own stories and it became plain to her that she had been fortunate to escape unscathed from the torment and oppression of Whitehall. As she told her story her father took on the attributes of an inquisitor of Spain and she saw him crouching like a spider at Whitehall, even now awaiting her return. She saw his agents, scattered about the country hid in innocent cottages, in inns, along the road, waiting to pounce and slay, burn, poison, strangle. The country was full of talk of the Irish Catholic soldiery who had spread arson and murder wherever they were quartered. Let William's plans miscarry and these heathens would be let loose all over the country. Anne tried to hide her rising fear under quick chatter. She chattered to young men having their first taste of fighting, inflamed with the notions of defending a comely young princess. " Kill the lot," muttered the red-faced young squires, clattering virgin swords. And Anne remembered some echo of history : an association for killing every Papist. Had not Elizabeth blessed some such league years before ? How simple everything would be then, when the country was clear of Papists and the good work could start unobstructed ! Anne collected her young men and explained the scheme. They were delighted, shouted and made passes at imaginary Papists lurking behind curtains. Even Archbishop Compton thought the idea worth discussing. Anne bade him call a council to meet at an inn and discuss the formation of such

a league. Compton would draw up the articles of the association and they would all sign it.

Anne came to the inn next day and found several hundred gentlemen awaiting her ; Chesterfield among them looking out from under his heavy eyebrows with grave, unconciliatory eyes. The meeting was scarcely opened when he declared that he had never been called to a council with so little notice, and that now the business of the council was known to him he would have nothing to do with it. He was clearly revolted, and Anne, glancing around at other faces in the room, saw that most of them were turned away from her ; everyone there was showing distaste though he had not the temerity to express his disapproval to a Stuart as frankly as Lord Chesterfield, who, having served kings, could not be put out of countenance by a young princess. Diffident though they were, nevertheless Anne's gentlemen declined to sign the articles of the association. Anne could not speak for anger and mortification. When Chesterfield came to take his departure she looked at him deliberately and then turned her back. She dared not turn round for some seconds lest she should see him shrug his shoulders as he withdrew.

Anne had only to endure her fears for a few days longer. William advanced nearer London : James was at his mercy. He attempted to retire to France, was captured by sailors who mistook him for a flying Papist, and was obliged to return to London. The church bells rang for him and the crowds threw flowers, but everyone knew he was a prisoner. Already the Queen had fled with the infant prince. For a few hours there was suspense again. Then William sent a message to his father-in-law ; he was to withdraw his guards and retire—finally. The Dutch were at the gates.

On December 12th Anne, riding in triumph through the Midlands, her little army now swollen to thousands of mounted country gentlemen, her old tutor riding ahead carrying a purple standard, her buff-coated guards around her, received news that her father had left Whitehall at midnight and fled to France. The next day she entered Oxford. She was met outside the town by a company of horsemen, the Mayor received her at the gate with a speech. Bells were ringing, flags were flying from the towers and spires. Soldiers were everywhere, horsemen jostling each other in the crowded alleys, troopers pushing townsfolk off the paths. Bugles answered each other in the narrow lanes between the colleges. Women hung out of upper windows. Cloaks, horses, flags, pikes, children peeping between soldiers' legs, made a jumble of colour against the grey stone ; there was a jumble of noises : cries, shouts, cheers, trumpets, the tap of drums. Anne's coach was held up, pushed on, hands reached towards her, threw flowers. Sudden horsemen galloped by, scattering the mob.

Her coach turned into Christchurch quadrangle. The noise of cheering rose higher and crashed down. There across the green lawn, before the patient grey buildings, sat George astride his black horse, his officers about him, gay with their coloured sashes and the plumes in their hats. His long face was redder than ever, his mouth was wide with the familiar smile. He advanced to meet her.

They had rounded the curve of danger and separation and had come together again on the other side. Dread and terror and childhood were past. Together they turned their faces to the generous future.

PART TWO

PART II

I

IN one of the smaller rooms at Hampton Court the royal family were dining quietly together. The King sat at the head of the table, a little, sharp-featured, yellow-faced man, on either side of him the two sisters, Queen Mary and the Princess Anne. Mary had the beauty of maturity, her countenance was round, soft, and benign. There was no aggression in those large eyes, only receptivity it seemed ; yet Stuart obstinacy was not lacking in the curves of her mouth. Anne was expecting confinement in a month's time. She sat lumpishly in her chair, her head poked forward a little. Her face had the beauty, even yet, of the face of a child, but the expression was reserved and watchful. Her mouth was sulky, the lower lip thrust slightly out ; her short sight forced a frown on her forehead, her eyes were unresponsive and moved slowly from object to object. Anne was growing coarse. While Mary grew fat as a contented matron grows fat, her body becoming softer and whiter with the years, Anne grew coarse as do those who make eating the main activity of the day. Her increasing chins added more to her air of obstinacy than to her benevolence.

One or two servants stood by the walls and Arnold Keppel behind the King's chair. He was a pretty boy, fresh-coloured, with fair hair, a great favourite of William's, who pulled at his sleeve once or twice during the meal when he needed some attention or other.

The King ate abstractedly, bent over his food, taking up mouthful after mouthful, quickly, as if he were eating in a race. As he chewed he glanced about the

room, but he scarcely ever turned his large dark eyes on his wife or sister-in-law. Mary seemed quite oblivious of his inattention, but Anne was becoming more and more sulky. She was suffering one of those fits of chagrin which overwhelmed her so often now. She hated William at this moment, and she despised her sister for not hating him too, the ill-formed monster, the ugly little Hollander. For this creature, she thought morosely, she had resigned her rights. The crown he wore now was more truly hers than his. Yet even if Mary died she was to sit by and watch him rule her country. When *he* died—and when did these diseased little creatures die?—she would reign. What a position for a Stuart, in whom the divine flame of kingship burned unfailingly, to watch their throne bandied about between foreigners!

Set a ball rolling and what strange paths it took! A year ago William had been, for her, simply the head of a liberating force. He would come, lift a weight off the country and then—retire? Anne had not thought so far. But take affairs into his own hands—"I will not be my wife's gentleman usher"—Anne had not expected that attitude. Not even wise Mrs. Freeman had supposed that William was going to insist on a kingship for his pains, or order the accession this way or that. Yet was William alone responsible for all these changes? Anne felt there was some power behind him whose existence she had only suspected hitherto. Parliament, had said Mrs. Freeman, when persuading her to surrender quietly during the accession disputes, Parliament had set its mind on such a settlement; William and his wife to reign, with the powers which Parliament gave them (and what shadowy powers compared with the old-time prerogatives!), then William to rule alone when

his wife died, then Anne or her children. Anne remembered how, a year or so back, when her father's Parliament had vetoed the Test Act Repeal, she had half admired, half shrunk from the suddenly revealed determination of that body of commoners. Now those men were a power to reckon with ; some balance in the social scales had tipped, rolled over into the other pan.

Whether they were entirely responsible or not for her present ignoble position, Anne had many other causes for grievance against the King and Queen. Mary patronised her, William ignored her. There were two camps : the interlopers who came over from Holland and tried to alter and arrange ; the original inhabitants who tried to show the stranger how best to manage affairs. Anne and the Churchills knew a thing or two. They were firmly put aside. " Churchill shall never govern me and my wife as he governed the Prince and Princess of Denmark," William had said once, and again, " I wish no petticoat meddling."

Churchill had been created Earl of Marlborough, but the title was all for which he had to thank William. Though the King consulted him on military matters and used his influence with the soldiers, he had ignored him when the rewards were made. Truly, as Lady Marlborough grumbled to Anne, they had been better off before. Without Marlborough the revolution could never have happened. He had carried the army over ; he had guided the Prince and Princess of Denmark ; he, in spite of his belief in hereditary kingship, had stayed away from Parliament the day the Commons had decided to offer William the crown, so that his own opposition would not further confuse the affairs of his beloved country. He it was who acted as go-between with Dutch and English. Yet he had not, in reward, been

offered so much as command of the army. Out in Flanders in the war against France, into which Dutch William had immediately plunged his new country, Marlborough was only second in command. And Mary, of course, hated Lady Marlborough. In spite of the gracious letters they had exchanged while the revolution was brewing, in spite of Anne's earnest defence of her friend's morals, Mary continued to cast her old aspersions on the Countess. The truth was, the King and Queen were jealous of the Marlboroughs. Anne felt some triumph at this thought. At least the Denmarks held the Marlboroughs still. The friendship she offered to Mr. and Mrs. Freeman was loyal and selfless : this the Freemans knew, nor could bribes or threats tempt them away from their old allegiance to the side of this new foreign king.

She had thought she would be free when the great change came ; those aggravating restrictions would be lifted. With a sure income and a worthy position she had seen herself settling comfortably down as heir to the throne. There would be pleasure and no responsibility ; protection without reproaches. Basset, hunting, beagling, music, a little travel from Bath to the Wells, from Winchester to Newmarket, in the intervals of child-bearing. But things were very different from what she had expected. She was terribly short of money. She could not even afford to keep up her own household, and she and George had to live, like pensioners, in apartments in Hampton Court. The Marlboroughs had schemed to lay the matter of her allowance before Parliament. Under the new order of things, the King (how times had changed!) was voted an annual income, and did not receive the money till Parliament had given its annual consent. Why should not Anne receive the same

treatment? In this matter Anne was graciously inclined towards Parliament. It was a more reliable source of income than William's privy purse. But William was furious at the very suggestion of her appealing to the Government for money.

Then at this very dinner they had been discussing Anne's residence. William had long since promised her the Portsmouth apartments at Whitehall in exchange for the Cockpit. But Mary had looked sullen when Anne mentioned the matter. Lord Devonshire wanted those apartments for ballrooms. However, she sighed, she would consult him. "Whichever way he decides," said Anne sharply, "I will not take the Earl of Devonshire's leavings." William had remembered his promise in the end, but Mary had been cold ever since, had pretended not to hear what Anne said, had criticised her ladies, taken offence at small lapses from etiquette on the part of Lady Marlborough or Lady Fitzharding.

Now at dinner Anne put in a plea for the palace of Richmond. Her child must have a place in which to grow up out of the London smoke. Besides the palace, as Anne knew, had been for centuries the seat of the heir to the throne, and she was continually having to drive home to William and Mary that she was the heir. They steadily refused to accept her insinuations. At the time, Richmond was leased by one of the Villiers sisters and the disgraceful Elizabeth had made her lover promise not to bestow the place on his sister-in-law. Elizabeth and the Countess of Marlborough were old enemies. The two had made this difficulty over the palace into an occasion for a war which amused half Whitehall and infuriated the other half.

At dinner to-day Anne had had to accept William's decision. She could not have Richmond. William,

having delivered himself of the verdict, seemed to forget the whole question and occupied himself with his food. The conversation turned to Ireland. James had landed there with French troops. General Schomberg had embarked to oppose him. The women asked William which regiments had gone over, which officers ; but William, who thought that women should not interest themselves in such matters, answered shortly, turned to Keppel and began to speak to him about some preparation for his voyage to Flanders. William was far more interested in the campaign there than in home affairs. Mary accepted the rebuff without dismay. Anne grew sulkier, but, wishing to maintain at least an appearance of concord before the attendants, turned to Mary and asked her if she had been to any of the bazaars, or heard any music that day ?

Before Mary could reply, however, Anne's attention was entirely distracted from her. That morning she had sent out a gardener to scour the grounds for early peas. She had had a hankering suddenly for peas, and knew very well that in her condition she should not deny herself anything. All through the dinner the soft, transparently green little pellets had lain before her in a yellow china dish. Her chagrin had been somewhat allayed by the anticipation of eating them. Now, to her horror, William reached out an arm, drew her dish of peas towards him and began to eat them in his quick, abstracted manner.

Anne sat almost open-mouthed, her eyes fixed on the peas. She watched their progress from plate to mouth, up and down, up and down. Mary saw her discomfiture, but Mary could never say a word to cross William. She talked amiably to cover the situation, but Anne did not reply. She sat, huge, sulky, her eyes on William's



The Duke of Gloucester
G. Kneller del. J. Smith sculp.

plate, her face turning a deep scarlet which spread slowly down her neck and over her bosom. For this man they had shaken a throne and changed the ancient laws of England !

During the next two years irritation between the sisters turned to rancour, from rancour to open hostility. The cause lay deeper than politics. While the North Sea was between them, Mary and Anne had been good friends ; they had forgotten how, faced with each other, a thousand resentments grew up to deaden the lustre of their friendship. Mary represented to Anne that spirit of family interference with personal happiness, of censure, which she hoped had vanished with her father. Anne to Mary was the stupid, misguided younger sister still, blind to her own advantages, ungrateful, and, above all, unappreciative of her beloved William.

For a few weeks, when the Duke of Gloucester was born, the sisters came together. But Anne in the sunshine of family concord did not forget practical affairs ; she had to have that allowance. The House was debating the matter when Anne, making her curtsy to the Queen during an evening reception, found herself fixed with a cold stare. "What is the meaning," asked the Queen slowly, "of the proceedings in the House of Commons?" Anne was not frightened of her sister. She replied casually, "My friends there wish to move that I have some settlement." "*Friends,*" said the Queen. "And pray what friends have you but the King and me?"

Anne received her settlement, though not before considerable bitterness had been aroused between her and the King and Queen as well as between the Throne and her friends who had pushed the matter in Parlia-

ment. After £50,000 a year was voted to the Princess the cleft between her friends and the King's friends, between herself and her sister, was clearly seen.

But Anne was able to leave Hampton Court at last. She went back to the Cockpit and turned the Portsmouth apartments into a nursery for her son, who was actually thriving. Here the Queen sent a daily messenger who knelt before the infant duke and delivered a compliment. No compliment went to the baby's mother.

Anne found herself drawn into a camp, even as she had been drawn into one two years before. This time she had acted more deliberately, she had taken the first step in demanding certain rights, such as her allowance, which she believed belonged to her station. But again she was surprised to discover the implications of her action. With William and Mary one could not ask ; one had to demand ; from self-assertion it was a short step to opposition. William made the situation worse by his uncompromising rudeness. He continually snubbed George, although the Prince's eager friendliness to everyone in the world was not at all dulled by the dissension among his relations-in-law. He offered to fight for William in Ireland or anywhere else and obtained 7,000 Danish soldiers for him. William took these but he refused to let George command them, and refused even to let George so much as ride in his own coach during the campaign—a signal insult.

The travail of '88 was almost forgotten in '90. The present resentments were the only troubles that had ever existed. The sight of Dutch nobles, rich with English money, living in English houses, whose owners were too poor to keep them ; of slights suffered from foreigners by English patriots ; the peril of living between two kings, one but unsteadily on the throne, the other

but unsteadily in exile, were fraying the nerves of Anne's friends. They had drawn a different picture for themselves in the summer of '88. They had risked their lives to make England free for Englishmen ; apparently they had only made England free for Dutchmen. Bentinck and Schomberg and Zulestein were rewarded for the work which English patriots had done. The King himself did not even trouble to rule ; he was abroad almost continuously on one campaign or another. Meanwhile the country was starving while it paid for his soldiers' rations. It was not long before William's grumblers discovered themselves to be James's friends.

Anne's own resentment had only gradually turned to hostility, yet now, three years after her father's abdication, she was so consciously an enemy of his enemies that she was not at all surprised when Mrs. Freeman revealed to her that Lord Marlborough was in correspondence with the King over the water, and suggested that Anne also write a letter to her father. It would do no harm. It was an easy matter to write letters and need lead to nothing. With Sarah beside her Anne wrote :

“ I have been very desirous of some safe opportunity to make you sincere and humble offer of my duty and submission to you ; and to beg you will be assured that I am both truly concerned for the misfortune of your condition, and sensible, as I ought to be, of my unhappiness. As to what you may think I have contributed to it, if wishes could recall what is past, I had long since redeemed my fault. I am sensible it would have been a great relief to me, if I could have found means to have acquainted you earlier with my repentant thoughts, but I hope they may find the advantage of

coming late—of being less suspected of insincerity, than perhaps they would have been at any time before.

“It will be a great addition to the ease I propose to my own mind by this plain confession, if I am so happy as to find that it brings any real satisfaction to yours, and that you are as indulgent and easy to receive my humble submissions as I am to make them, in a free, disinterested acknowledgment of my fault, for no other end but to deserve and receive your pardon.

“I have had a great mind to beg you to make one compliment for me, but fearing the expressions which would be properest for me to make use of might be, perhaps the least convenient for a letter, I must content myself, at present, with hoping the bearer will make a compliment for me to the Queen.”

Again she had been caught into conspiracy.

Anne sheltered herself in Lady Marlborough, thanking Providence for the strong protector who never failed her. She looked on Mr. and Mrs. Freeman with amazement. Loyalty was so rare ; they had been loyal though it cost them everything. Each day Anne received some intimation from the Queen that Lady Marlborough's dismissal was necessary to royal favour. The King's dislike of her husband increased with his loyalty to the Denmarks. Anne, breathless with gratitude to her friends, puzzled how to reward them. She pressed Mrs. Freeman to accept an annuity of £1,000 from her own allowance. Mrs. Freeman hesitated, said she must consider the matter. Anne nearly wept at the frustration of her good intentions. But in a few days the gift was accepted.

Anne felt happier now she had repaid her friend a little. She had need to be strengthened. Within

quick succession came a series of thunderclaps. The Queen quarrelled with her at an evening Court for daring to give Lady Marlborough an annuity, and the echoes of shrill words had not died from her ears when Mrs. Freeman came in, white and trembling, to tell her that Lord Marlborough had been dismissed from all his appointments.

Up to that moment the rupture between the sisters had not penetrated to public occasions. Now the situation was past control. Anne and Lady Marlborough appeared three weeks after Marlborough's disgrace at a Court function. Mary barely accepted their greeting. The next day Anne received a letter from her sister. She was to dismiss her friend, once and for all.

"I know this will be uneasy to you" (wrote the Queen), "and I am sorry for it, for I have all the real kindness imaginable for you ; and, as I ever have, so will always do my part, to live with you as sisters ought ; that is not only like so near relations, but like friends, and as such I did think to write to you. . . . And when you have well considered, you will find that, though the thing be hard (which I again assure you I am sorry for), yet it is not unreasonable, but what has ever been practised, and what yourself would do were you in my place."

Anne called in her uncle Rochester, but he would not help her. She wrote to the Queen refusing to comply. Messengers went back and forth. Whitehall waited uneasily. Someone had carried tales to Whitehall of correspondence with absent friends, that was obvious ; and if one correspondent were discovered, who could remain hidden ? At the Cockpit Sarah tossed her head and said she did not care what the Queen might do,

and Anne, a little quaveringly, said she did not care either so long as her dearest Mrs. Freeman did not leave her. They waited for the next bombshell. It came in the shape of an official message from the Queen (for the King, as usual, was away). The Earl and Countess of Marlborough were ordered to leave Whitehall.

The Countess went crimson with anger ; she stood forgetful of Anne, now weeping helplessly, crumpling the letter in her hand. Her eyes flamed ; she talked to herself. Anne ran to her and clasped her hand. If Mrs. Freeman went, Mrs. Morley would go too. She would never remain to be insulted alone in that place of enemies. Together they would go out into the world, and her child (Anne was pregnant again) would be born among strangers in a strange house. Mrs. Freeman came back to herself, smiled, caressed her princess and begged her not to sacrifice herself, but Anne grew hysterical at the thought of being frustrated. Sarah desisted from her persuasions ; soothed her and led her to a chair. Anne called for ink and paper and wrote to her sister again. . . . " I shall be obliged to retire and deprive myself of the satisfaction of living where I might have frequent opportunities of assuring you of that duty and respect which I always have been, and shall be desirous to pay you, upon all occasions."

SO Anne and her retinue retired from palace life to Sion House, which had been lent her by the Duke of Somerset. She had some satisfaction in hearing that William had commanded the Duke to decline giving hospitality to his sister-in-law. But the Duke preferred to dispose of his own house as he liked.

Here Anne's next child was born dead, and here, the day of her confinement, she saw her sister for the last time. Anne had sent a message when her time was near, that she felt very ill, but Mary ignored this. Later, however, when a second messenger came, Mary visited the sick princess with the Countess of Scarborough and the Countess of Derby.

Anne was tired to death. She scarcely cared that the child was dead. She had lost the hope of a large family, all she wished now was that one, or mercifully two, children should live from the many she still expected to bear. Tired and weak she felt a strange longing for her family, for anyone bearing the name of Stuart. For Stuarts were different from others; they were united at least by the touch of that God who had made them kings. Even though she hated them as they all hated each other, she recognised this kind of divinity, and sometimes, as at this time, she felt a nostalgia for her own kind.

Mary entered the room. She was magnificently dressed, her hair rising like a crested wave, breaking into little curls at the summit and supported by a lace coif. Lace frothed about her shoulders and issued forth from her sleeves. Her stiff brocade dress was of yellow and she wore a cluster of diamonds on her chest.

As soon as Anne saw her sister's face she came back

to reality. Mary least of all of them possessed the Stuart tang. She was lost in William. She would have no comprehension of the nostalgia which had obliterated Anne's pride and made her call for help that day. She swept up to the bed and sat down beside it. "I have made the first step in coming to you, and now I expect you should make the next by dismissing Lady Marlborough," she announced.

They must quarrel. Anne shut her eyes. "I have never in my life disobeyed your Majesty but in this one particular," she said faintly, "and I hope at some time or other it will appear as unreasonable to your Majesty as it does now to me."

The Queen rose, motioned the two countesses to her and left the room. Lady Scarborough half turned as though to say a word. Anne hoped she would not stay, for sympathy then would have made her cry and she could not have borne that. But the Countess thought better of it, shook her head and followed the other two. George, who had been standing by troubled and embarrassed, ran after them.

Blood was, after all, less thick than water. Anne struggled through her convalescence and braced herself afresh on Mrs. Freeman to face the catastrophes which were to follow.

Her royal pomp had dwindled. She moved to Berkeley House shortly after her confinement, putting the child into Campden House, which she had taken because of its bracing situation. At Berkeley House she was cramped for room, and she had to attend to a hundred irksome details of housekeeping which had been outside her province hitherto. Her guard was removed by royal command, so that she rode unattended like any private person and was even robbed on one occasion

on the road to Sion. She was watched, she knew, and was under suspicion of corresponding with St. Germain. She was being treated like a naughty child by Whitehall, even the ladies of the Court were forbidden to visit her, and when Anne went to Bath to fortify herself after her lying-in the Queen commanded the Mayor "not to pay her Highness any respect or ceremony without leave from her Majesty." Anne stoutly said she did not care, but the Countess of Marlborough was furious.

To top these minor distresses came a rumour that a French pro-Jacobite invasion was expected, and immediately following came the news of Lord Marlborough's arrest. This was not entirely unexpected. Though none of the three admitted so openly to each other, Anne knew that their correspondence with St. Germain was not quite innocent and that William knew as much as he needed to know of it. The charge against Marlborough was not made clear; the actual evidence against him was given by a man who was afterwards proved to be a forger and a liar and his evidence was annulled. Nevertheless Marlborough was sent to the Tower and kept there and William refused to make explanations. And Lady Marlborough packed up her belongings, swift and decisive in devotion as in treachery, and moved off to lodgings near his prison. Anne stayed behind and wrote to her.

" . . . I am just told by pretty good hands, that as soon as the wind turns westerly there will be a guard set upon the Prince and me. If you hear there is any such thing designed, and that 'tis easy to you, pray let me see you before the wind changes, for afterwards, one does not know whether they will let one have opportunities of speaking to one another; but let them do

what they please, nothing shall ever vex me so I can have the opportunity of seeing dear Mrs. Freeman ; and I swear I would live on bread and water, between two walls, without repining ; for as long as you continue kind, nothing can ever be a mortification to your faithful Mrs. Morley, who wishes she may never enjoy a moment's happiness in this world or the next, if ever she proves false to you."

Not till some time after the naval victory at La Hogue, when James watched his own defeat by ships he had built and sailors he had trained, was Marlborough released. For the time being the Jacobite danger was crushed and Marlborough was safe at large. He came from the Tower to Berkeley House with his wife. He was bitter and distraught now as Anne had not seen him before. His commands were taken from him, he was left for the first time with no post of honour, no responsibility. He found time heavy on his hands, read eagerly in the news journals of the battles in Flanders where the English soldiers fared so badly. He cursed William, cursed Halifax, Sunderland, Shrewsbury, everyone who had managed to stay in power when he had been trapped. He walked up and down the house morosely. Anne was quite frightened of him, but the Countess was angry at his gloom and tried to quarrel with him.

Gradually, however, he began to pick up his old interests. His friends came, at first cautiously, then in small parties to see him at Berkeley House. They walked in the huge garden that stretched so far north of Piccadilly. Anne found a little Court forming about her again. All those who had some grudge against the Throne, those who for personal or political reasons found themselves in the opposition, came to Berkeley House.

Her martyrdom had brought her some glory. She loved the pomp of a Court, the perfectly conducted ceremony, the beautifully executed bow, the trumpets and trains. These were gone, yet she was aware of a heartening respect from "her people." It was satisfying to notice that the street songs of which she caught snatches over her wall when walking in the garden, the airs to which strolling pipers and ballad singers tuned their voices, were all directed to mock at her Dutch brother-in-law. In many of them she figured as heroine. One squib specially pleased her and she ordered a copy to be brought so that she could read it to George.

THE BELLMAN OF PICCADILLY'S VERSES TO
PRINCESS ANNE

Welcome, great princess, to this lowly place,
Where injured loyalty must hide its face ;
Your praise each day by every man is sung,
And in the night by me shall here be rung.
God bless our queen, and yet I may moreover,
Own you our queen, in Berkeley Street and Dover ;
May your great prince and you live numerous years,
This is the subject of our loyal prayers.

"What a *beautiful* poem !" said George when she had finished.

Besides these tributes she received every mark of deference from certain of the old loyalist clergy, who incurred the Queen's displeasure by their conduct. Anne felt a keener pleasure in the homage she received from her little group than she had ever felt in the pomp of the old days, for every bow marked up another score against the disagreeable couple on the throne.

There were other elements in her life which were making her curiously happy now. There was her

friendship with Sarah, now less of a friendship with Sarah, indeed, than an immersion in Sarah. Anne had deliberately sunk her personality in her friend's during the '88 troubles ; she had never gained full possession of herself since then. Had she and George found the peace and security they had hoped for after William's accession, Anne might have established herself again ; but since trouble continued Anne had never left her hiding-place. Now she did not know that she hid herself. She wore Mrs. Freeman's ambitions and opinions as naturally as she wore her own clothes.

There was still another joy in her life, her son, the Duke of Gloucester. The child was now five years old, a lovely, large-eyed boy with a peculiar intelligence of his own. Since he had grown from infancy to childhood Anne had begun to face the fact that she would probably not survive her sister and brother-in-law. She had borne the heir ; she would be the mother of a line of kings. She adored the boy for this, for his kingship ; she loved him as the one child she had managed to rear, as the child who had kept her hopes alight. She grew languid over politics now ; her thoughts were on the boy constantly. Was he eating as he should ? Was he being rightly prepared for his life, was he dressed, attended, as befitted him ?

He was an anxiety to her and George. He had never been strong ; there was some trouble with his head—it was far too large and it lolled overweighted on his little neck. He was constantly ill, now with ague, now with giddiness. Anne, trying hard to keep herself under control, felt her heart beat furiously whenever a bad report was brought of his health. She sent wildly for doctors, ordered remedies she had heard were good. She had theories she had picked up from conversation

with all her married ladies ; she sent over all his meals from Berkeley House, his plain joints of meat and apple pie—never confectionery. Still in spite of her care the boy remained physically abnormal. He could not walk alone. George said gruffly he was too much petted by women. Yet little William was not girlish. He loved soldiers and noise and military amusements. He had his own regiment of little boys who made life a terror to the staff at Campden House. He observed everything, listened to everything. The brain inside his poor, monstrous head was at least fully developed for his age.

He was the only link between Anne and her sister. Whosoever's son he might be, young William of Gloucester was the coming Stuart, the safeguard against the boy, one year his senior, at St. Germain's. Mary and William, ignoring his parentage, patronised the child. He was allowed the entrée to Kensington Palace, which had become the royal residence since Whitehall had been burnt down in 1691. The King approved of his nephew's warlike taste. They strolled about the gardens making manly conversation to each other. The boy had pretty ways. On the King coming to see him at Campden House one day before leaving for Flanders, the child insisted on firing off three of his toy cannon in a royal salute. The fourth was broken, but the King promised to send a new one. The baby thanked him for his visit and added, "My dear King, you shall have both my companies, with myself, to serve you in Flanders."

But sometimes the small Duke's wit carried him too far. Walking one day with the King and Queen, he turned to Mary and remarked, "My Mamma had once guards as well as you, why has she not them now?" There was an embarrassed silence. Then the Duke's

drummer set up a roll, for which tactful gesture he was presented with two guineas by the King.

The two sisters continued to live carefully apart. Mary for the most part alone at Kensington, her husband abroad, struggling with her Cabinet, trying to keep her head clear over the intrigues and treacheries and deceits of her ministers ; lonely, frustrated, and proud. Anne at Berkeley House, wearing cheerfully an air of martyrdom ; surrounded by friends, cherished by her faithful George, adored by her child. Her figure since the last confinement was unshapely, her features had coarsened and reddened, but she still showed in the glint of her brown hair, in her eyes, and in her white slender fingers a protracted girlishness, while her voice had never lost its sweetness. Anne was busy with the duties of a matron, diverted by many pleasures still accessible to her, by shopping, a little playgoing (when the piece was not shocking), by expeditions to the Wells and Bath, and by hunting—though no longer, alas, on horseback, but in a light chaise which she drove herself.

The child had given her a new portion of life ; for him alone she developed an attitude of independence and detachment which was not natural to her ; and for her son, at least, Anne was an adult.

There seemed for some months every prospect that Anne would spend the rest of her life at Berkeley House as a comfortable matron with no importance apart from her position as mother to future kings. There were constant excitements in Jacobite circles of course ; Anne herself continued to write humbly, though non-committally to her father, and occasionally plots hatched by the conspirators were successful. An English expeditionary force was surprised at Brest on what was supposed to be a secret landing. Anne knew that

Marlborough had given the information to the French forces, and when the news came through of the massacre of the English soldiers she felt uneasy. She was glad enough to discuss treasonable matters, and even to write a few treasonable letters, but faced with the actual achievements of conspiracy she shrank away. Nevertheless, in spite of their plottings and secret messages, the strength had gone out of the Jacobite faction, and by the Christmas of 1694 Anne was far more concerned by her son's prattle, her own attack of dropsy and suspicions of pregnancy than by any affairs of State. There were rumours, too, that the Queen was ill. Official communications passed between Kensington and Berkeley House on the matter. It was nothing, a mere indisposition ; then suddenly it was a serious illness, smallpox or measles, and finally smallpox without doubt. Anne, being told, sat up suddenly on her couch where she had lain, swollen and uncomfortable, for some weeks. Several unexpected people were crowding into the room. Anne had mind for one thing only. "Smallpox—the child within a mile of it !" Sir Benjamin Bathurst was sent to see that the Duke was instantly removed from Campden House. This matter attended to, Anne lay back and looked with amazement at the strange crowd of people in her reception room. Some gentleman came forward whom she recognised as a familiar hanger-on at Court. He wished to offer his felicitations on the occasion of the Christmas season. Anne was mildly surprised. The young man was not well known to her. She looked at the Countess of Marlborough. She was preoccupied and excited. Other courtiers pressed forward. Slowly Anne began to understand. Her sister was very ill ; she must be dying. William would be left alone, and he would be wearing his crown only by

the courtesy of his sister-in-law, by a flimsy Act of Parliament. It was so long since she had felt the throne near to her that Anne was bewildered. The old ambitions rose slowly to the surface again. So Mary was dying. . . .

When the courtiers had withdrawn, the Countess had a private interview with Anne. She was excited and she infected Anne with her excitement. There was no knowing how the tide went with the Queen; she was seriously ill, yet her sister had not even at this time been invited to the Palace. Sarah advised Anne to risk a rebuff and send a message of inquiry to the Palace, so Anne wrote that she "was extremely concerned for her illness; and that if her Majesty would allow her the happiness of waiting upon her, she would, notwithstanding the condition she was in, run any hazard for her satisfaction." They received a polite message from the Countess of Derby, but no invitation to the Palace. Mrs. Freeman was sarcastic, but Anne did not respond to her jeers. She was thinking of some times in the past in which Sarah had played no part. Of nursery games at Richmond, drawing lessons with Gibson the dwarf, of Mary's three days of weeping before her marriage, of bedtime talks at The Hague when Mary was newly married, still a girl in her teens, of the black velvet rabbit, and of duets. Another Stuart was dying.

Every day a messenger from Berkeley House waited at Kensington but no personal message was returned, and though Lady Fitzharding finally forced herself into the Queen's bedroom to carry Anne's deep concern to the Queen, she received no more response than a gasping "Thanks" from Mary, who lay motionless, swollen and discoloured from erysipelas. Anne had done



everything she could towards a reconciliation, pointed out the Countess of Marlborough, who talked insistently and continuously to her during this period. Anne supposed she was right. She felt tired and rather ill, and she felt, despairingly, that for a while she wanted no more quarrels with anyone. She listened carefully to Mrs. Freeman and thanked her for her advice in this time of confusion. On December 28th Mary was dead.

Anne dared not look at Sarah when the news came. She knew how that fresh-coloured face would take on a formal expression of solemnity and still betray the exultation of the brain behind, busy with new schemes, planning fresh vistas. It would not do to cry before Mrs. Freeman—there was so little excuse for grief; she herself felt that this pain—as though one of her limbs had been cut off—was absurd. She had no reason to mourn Mary. She said as little as she could when the news was told; then as soon as she could be alone she sent for her son, the Stuart who still belonged to her. When he was brought in she gave way to her feelings. She called him to her and caressed him, her tears fell over his hair and face. But the child was too young. When she told him that his kind aunt had died he said, “I am sorry for it,” then hastened to tell her of some new cannon he had had made which could shoot all the way across his garden. His attendant tried to reprove the boy, but Anne shook her head, smiled wanly, and dismissed them.

III

WITHIN a day of the Queen's death Lord Sunderland waited on Anne for a serious consultation. This old enemy had fled to Holland when William had taken the crown, but his flight was only a gesture. Anne soon discovered after her father's abdication that the "workingest villain" had been working on her side and his extraordinary advice to King James had been his way of digging a pit for his master. William had not been long on the throne when Sunderland was recalled and reinstated. Now he was William's right-hand man. A new group of men had come to the fore, men like Wharton, a Whig peer, chiefly connected in Anne's mind with Newmarket in the old days, Somers, who had been but an obscure lawyer a few years ago, Montague the financial expert, and Russell the admiral, who was supposed to be in league with St. Germain's, though he did not scruple to lead his fleet to victory at La Hogue. These were all Whigs, and though Anne realised rather angrily that she too had acted as a Whig a few years ago, she still considered them enemies, and rather vulgar enemies at that. Ministers were picked in a different fashion now, the Countess tried to explain to her. It seemed that men were no longer chosen to advise the King for their loyalty or sagacity. Ministers were chosen to avoid wrangling in the council room; men of the Party in majority in Parliament held the highest places. This was a very pretty arrangement for Dutch William, who wanted to carry on a war with France and knew that the Tories were all for peace, for there was a Whig majority in the House.

Sunderland had waited on Anne once or twice before the Queen's death to discuss the matter he now

brought before her, reconciliation with the Court. Anne had always told him the same thing, that she was eager for this on any condition save that of the Marlboroughs' dismissal. Sunderland had always had to admit that on that point the Queen was indomitable.

But now Mary was dead, negotiations were opened again. Anne, weary, said she had made overtures enough ; she scarcely cared what happened. She was suffering great discomfort from her illness, could not move by foot at all, and she was terrified lest harm come to the child she hoped she was carrying. Mrs. Freeman, when Sunderland's graceful blue-brocade back had moved languidly off through the double doors of the Princess's apartment, sniffed and said William might well be grateful to his Minister. Of course he and the Whigs did not want Anne to be left outside the fold ; there were too many people in the country who believed with all their hearts that the crown belonged to her now her sister had died—this King by Act of Parliament business was not accepted by everyone—and the real heir, persecuted by William, might attract a very pretty party of her own which he would find inconvenient to handle. But Lord Marlborough came in then and shook his head at his wife and said sacrifices must be made sometimes and such talk did not smack of Christian charity. Now, while there was time for quarrels to fade and wounds to heal, let them for God's sake forget their wrongs. There had been too much dissension in the unhappy country, and half a King at Kensington and half a Queen at Berkeley House would neither injure one nor honour the other. With that, the Earl drew near to the Princess and prayed her earnestly that she would listen to the advice of his good friend Lord Sunderland and write to the King, for Parliament had set its face in

one direction and no handful of Tories here or scattered loyal country squires there could help her to claim her inheritance before the King's death.

"Say what you will," said Anne, "I am tired of quarrels." She ached all over, and when later they brought her the letter they had composed for her to be sent to the King, she signed it with relief and fell back on her couch without comment.

So Anne went back to St. James's Palace, which William gave her, and took with her her loving, puzzled George, her busy, shrewd Countess and the handsome, equable Earl. Once more she drove out between her mounted guards, once more her residence became a meeting-place of those in favour as well as those out of favour at Court. Distinguished foreigners and others in authority soon took the hint, and again Sir Charles Cotterel, still master of ceremonies, had the pleasure of introducing people of note to the reception room of the Prince and Princess of Denmark. William had restored her old home to her with a bad grace, and if it had not been pointed out to him that the people's favour had passed from the late Queen to Anne rather than to him, he might never have been induced to invite the Denmarks back to the Palace. He made no secret of hating his sister-in-law; insulted her as openly as he dared by keeping her waiting at receptions or ignoring her letters. When they were together he spoke to her as little as possible, turned aside his head and pretended not to hear what she said. Anne was irritated by his tactics, but she was not frightened of him; she knew the nation was behind her. She was still the Protestant Princess of the old days to them, a familiar and beloved figure, but nobody had any affection for William.

Back in favour, Anne was able to take her family to

Windsor Castle again. Young Gloucester was delighted. He ran about the castle, peeped over the battlements, and terrified his mother by rolling down the dry ditches of the fortifications. "But I must use myself to such things if I am to engage in sieges," he protested when she scolded. George was stern and told him to desist when his mother commanded him, but the next day Anne saw him from a window, pointing out a more convenient ditch to the child, who promptly repeated the exercise.

She was very nearly happy now. To be back at Windsor where neither stick nor stone had changed since she was a child was a reassurance to her of some eventual haven of safety in life. This place held her childhood, her womanhood ; it was a guarantee that she had lived, had come through perils, griefs, uncertainties after all ; though it was a reminder, too, that some golden age which she had always expected had never been attained. And those trees in Windsor forest stood as a memorial of certain hopes and happiness she would rather have forgotten.

There was only one fear in her heart : Gloucester's health. He was still delicate. He had not been able to walk till long after the usual age. Babyishness, grumbled George, who had no political opinions, but who knew very well what he wanted in the nursery. The boy must be disciplined, must learn to make himself do what was required of him. Anne had to fight down her solicitude. This boy, of all boys, she argued to herself, must conduct himself perfectly. She could not afford to spoil him. There could be no evasion when it came to dealing with her son's education. She had to set her teeth at the thought of making him unhappy ; never before had she put herself to grasp a misery.

This must be, she thought vaguely, one of those griefs which we are told are a necessary part of human life. The death of a child, a political misfortune—those were sent to one. But her beloved Gloucester must be perfect—and at six he could not walk. His legs were normal and he had no illness. He must be obstinate, as George said. So Gloucester was sickeningly beaten and at last did walk, lurched across the room from wall to wall, holding on to whatever bit of furniture he could reach, and even up and down stairs, slowly, holding on to each pillar of the banisters. And every little while he would stop for a moment and rest his great child's head against the back of a chair or a table-leg.

She and George spent their time together discussing him and planning fresh amusements. He would have boys from Eton to play with, little Peter Bathurst, Semandra's son, young Churchill and others, and they could have all the battles they wanted. And Gloucester could go hunting too, "but," said Anne firmly, before George could protest, "he shall not ride horseback in the forest and run the risk of being hurt by the low branches. Sir Fleetwood can disable the deer so that the chase shall not be too fast and Gloucester can follow in the coach."

Gloucester enjoyed himself at the hunt. He drew back from being blooded, but hearing this was the custom decided he liked it and then insisted that all his mother's ladies be blooded too. Then there was a battle with the three Etonians. They fought with a collection of real little pikes and muskets, Peter Bathurst holding the gallery and the stairs and Gloucester leading the others up St. George's Hall against them, and Peter really wounded him in the neck with his sword.

He had to work as hard as he played. Bishop Burnet

was appointed to instruct him, and Gloucester grew very restive in lesson time. He was fascinated by the way the Bishop smoked, for the Doctor had a very long pipe and in order to smoke comfortably he had to cut a hole in the brim of his hat through which he passed the stem. But this endearing trick did not make his lectures on divinity or Latin any less dull. Gloucester also had dancing lessons, but those soon came to an end, for he called his master an old dog for making him strain himself with exercises. Finally the King took a hand in his education, and Anne, who was beginning to quiet her fears, found herself trembling again. She remembered her own childhood—there seemed to be no chance, according to precedent, that the King would not take Gloucester away from her and surround him with preceptors of whom she disapproved.

Lord Marlborough, however, was chosen for one and the King graciously told her that she could choose the rest herself. Parliament had voted money for the Duke's education, but the King had the disposal of it. Anne chose the tutors, but William, abroad again, disregarded her list and his previous graciousness and told Marlborough that he would engage the other tutors at his leisure. Meanwhile the money Parliament had voted stayed with him, and Anne found herself reduced to making petty economies in order to keep the two households running. However, after a certain amount of the usual wrangling she had her way. It was still unsafe for the King to flout the mother of the heir. The country was restless and any split between St. James's and Kensington would bring a host of people over to the side of the Princess, ready to make trouble for the Dutchman.

The boy was still hers, that was all that Anne asked,

He ran into her room in the mornings as she sat at her toilet, full of talk and boasting and little songs he had composed. Anne worried about his language ; he consorted too much with the coachmen and pages. She tried to check him. "Who have you heard speak in that manner?" she asked him once, turning round from her glass. "Lewis Jenkins," he answered sulkily. "Lewis Jenkins shall be turned out of waiting then," said his mother decisively. But the Duke flushed with anxiety. "Oh no, Mamma, it was I myself did invent that word now I think of it." Anne kissed him ecstatically. She loved his small loyalties.

So the years passed and Anne settled into a security which seemed unbreakable. She was no longer a Princess fighting for her dignity, but an institution in the kingdom. There was always trouble with the King of course, who grew more surly year by year, even as his cough became more irritating ; he never let slip an opportunity of insulting the family at St. James's. There were always stories passing from Kensington back stairs to St. James's back stairs which found their way to Anne. He could not hurt the mother of the heir ; Anne did not mind him. She even wrote courteously to him and attended his receptions.

She suffered a good deal from her health ; her digestion was weak—for she indulged in over-eating, and even drank more than she could afford to—and she was brought low year after year with bearing children who died ever a day or so after their birth.

There was, too, always trouble brewing in politics. There had been a rumour that William had found a new bride during his campaigning. This caused consternation among Whig and Tory alike, for a son to William might have made an unfortunate situation for everyone.

But it seemed there was nothing in that. Then Whig and Tory were laying plots for the future. It was obvious that when Anne came to the throne (and William was not very strong now), the Tories would come in. But at the close of 1698 they were returned, even with a big majority, and Anne's old friends, Rochester and Godolphin, came back to power. There was a reaction against the war, after years of famine and high prices. Then Louis put his troops into Flanders, and of course the nation rose in anger as it had often risen before when the French drums were beaten so near the English coast, and the peaceful Tories sent out an army with the same enthusiasm as their predecessors. This should have been Marlborough's chance, but he was still under suspicion. He was friendly with William now, that was enough for the Tories ; he was corresponding with King James, that was enough for the Whigs. So the three old friends, Marlborough, Sunderland, and Godolphin, conferred together and the result was a series of marriages. Young Godolphin married one of the lovely Churchill girls ; Sunderland's son another. This made an alliance of valour and brains and beauty that could hold a party of Whigs or Tories at bay.

Anne was delighted at the romances. She gave large dowries to the girls. The sight of young love and the thought of so much goodwill among her friends filled her heart with thankfulness. All was for the best and happiness came to all ; and she pressed Mrs. Freeman to take a thank-offering of ten thousand pounds on the marriage of the eldest girl. But the Countess declined so large a gift, and Anne realised that she had overstepped the bounds of decorum. Mrs. Freeman would of course suffer in the world's eyes, should her family accept such bounty. She made the amount five thousand

pounds, and later offered the same to the younger daughter, writing :

“ I have a request to make my dear Mrs. Freeman ; it is whenever dear Lady Hariote marries, you would give me leave to give her something to keep me in her thoughts. I beg my poor mite may be accepted, being offered from a heart that is without any reserve, with more passion and sincerity, my dear Mrs. Freeman, than any other can be capable of.”

There was a great deal to occupy Anne's thoughts. Three houses had to be run, for Windsor took much of her time ; her son had to be cared for ; her own health demanded frequent pilgrimages to the Wells and Bath ; she still attended the racing regularly, and she had to busy herself a certain amount with affairs of State ; settle and listen to the grievances of friends and enemies. Even Bishop Burnet worried her about the pews in St. James's Chapel. He said the ladies-in-waiting did not look at him while he preached ; “ nay, they prefer looking at any other person,” he insisted. The pews must be raised so high that the ladies could see no one but himself while service was being held. Anne suddenly began to laugh ; the Bishop grew more and more stern. “ The interests of the Church are at stake, Madam,” he said loudly. So Anne stopped laughing and told him to take whatever steps he felt necessary. When he had gone she smiled again and felt surprised at her own mirth. Surely she had not had the custom of laughing at persons of dignity who came to consult her ? It had been seldom enough, till lately, that she had ever been considered of sufficient consequence to consult at all. That was all changed now. She was

accepted, she accepted herself. Now, curiously enough, occasionally, very occasionally, the world seemed spread out at her feet and she looked down upon it, saw folk busy with their lives. At such times she felt alone, though not very much afraid, and she laughed at these little people and grieved with them. Such moments did not last long, she quickly lost the strange peace, and the laughter and perception which caused it. Gloucester might run in carrying with him all the apprehension she could not banish for his safety and happiness ; or Mrs. Freeman would bustle through the room, her head on one side, her sharp eyes alight, agog with warnings against this or that man, bubbling with advice or suggestion for to-morrow's outing or to-day's almsgiving, or a sudden shout of anger in the street outside would make her look up suddenly and bring the old fear into her throat. Then Anne, falling back into life again, would sink into that docile inertia which clung so comfortably to her soul.

IV

IT was the eleventh birthday of the Duke of Gloucester. Anne was on the terrace with the boy, with George and Mulgrave, now Marquis of Normanby. Her latest lady-in-waiting, Abigail Hill, a protégée of Lady Marlborough's, was in attendance. Below in the courtyard the servants were hurrying to and fro, putting the last touches to the scaffolding for the fireworks. It had been a lovely July day ; the sun had set, the world was waiting for a moment till summer brightness faded into shadow and dusk fell. Various sounds—distant voices, trampling of horses in a hidden courtyard, a cuckoo calling from the beeches—floated clearly on the air.

Anne's heart caught the serenity too, seemed to be tugging away from her body ; her happiness was so great that it hurt her. It seemed to her incredible that her child should be so beautiful. He was dressed in silver and blue, the riband of the Garter lay across his chest, which sparkled with orders and jewels. His buckles were of diamond ; his little sword gem-hilted. No jewels were so bright as his eyes, shining with excitement, deep blue. His face was pale and the veins showed through the skin on his high forehead, which the fair periwig left clear, curling back to fall on his shoulders as gracefully as any gallant's. He stood with his fists clenched, thumping the balustrade ; impatient for the show to begin, glancing up at his father, full of questions.

Anne was glad to know Normanby was with her now. She had almost forgotten what had happened between them years before, yet some peculiar happiness was associated with his presence ; with him she slipped into a facility of speech and thought that was not really

natural to her. For his part, he treated her always with a gentleness and personal attention which she never received from anyone else. Nevertheless she did not see him often, nor did she miss his company. Now, his presence there completed some circle. He and George and the boy—she forgot she had been lamenting a while ago that the Earl and Countess of Marlborough had not been able to leave their home at Althorpe for the celebrations.

There had been music earlier in the afternoon, a choir had sung a special birthday ode and followed it by some halting verses of the Duke's which had been set to music by the organist at Windsor Chapel. Now, inside the Castle, some ladies were bribing the boys to sing for their own pleasure some ballads of the day and some lyrics. To the group on the terrace came the sound of a boy's voice in a refrain of Mr. Dryden's :

'Tis a pleasure, a pleasure, to pine and to languish,
When we hope, when we hope, to be happy again.

Anne laughed and turned to Normanby. "That is how we sing when the sun shines again, my lord."

"We are born again with every fresh joy, Highness," said Normanby lightly, "and remember nothing of the birth pangs."

Anne was hardly listening.

"And so we are happy again—but is it the same happiness? What a number of faces has happiness, and never the face we looked for."

"And what a number of feet," murmured Normanby.

"Do you say poetry?" interrupted George, who turned as they laughed. "My wife understands these things," he added, beaming with pride, "I am a soldier *simple-*

ment." He took Anne's hand and patted it indulgently. The next moment there was an explosion and a great orange flower soared up into the air with a moan. Cheers broke out, the show had begun. The child jumped up and down, and his father was almost as excited.

"Est-il possible? C'est magnifique!" exclaimed the Prince, who after seventeen years of fireworks in England had never grown less astonished at the marvel. Roses, oranges, fleurs-de-lis, soared up above the blue, motionless trees and fell in coloured rain. A single star shot up and fell slowly, slowly back to earth. Anne remembered something, a meteor which had fallen so, how some hope had risen and died as it died; and now, like an echo, a faint fear woke in her heart again. She put her hand on the boy's shoulder and drew him close to her. But the next moment he had wriggled away with impatience to see a huge coloured picture of himself caught up in the air, trembling slightly. As it fell Anne turned her face aside.

"Jack," she whispered suddenly to Normanby, "you have seen him playing and working, you know his weakness—tell me he *can* live."

Normanby's large, strange eyes were dark with pity.

"What can I say, Madam? These things are in the hands of God; but surely He owes you a debt?"

Debts? Anne shivered. "Let us go in," she said loudly, turning to the company, and set everyone scuffling. "The Duke is cold."

The next day the Duke of Gloucester was sick; his head and throat ached. Pages playing in the ante-room of his apartments sprang to attention as one of his gentlemen hurried in, gave them short commands. Pages sped away through all the corridors of the Palace,

one to Mrs. Hill, another to the Prince, others to summon attendants. Mrs. Hill took the news and hurried away too, turning her head left and right to those loitering on the stairs, along the passages : " The Duke is ill, the Duke is ill ! " On through the Castle hurried the messengers, gathering courtiers at their heels, spreading the news farther and farther, nearer and nearer to the Princess's quarters. The Castle was filled with the clattering of feet all drawing towards one door. Anne at her toilet table heard the sound, rose, came out from her room and faced the people. Abigail ran forward, too frightened to curtsy, but Anne knew what she would say. She thought very quickly, " I must do what is best now. No time for fear now." She moved swiftly, purposefully down the passage, beckoned to two boys standing by, white and apprehensive, sent one for a physician, another to the stables. A messenger must fetch Doctor Radcliffe.

Anne did not waver. She waited by Gloucester's bed, smiled whenever he opened his eyes, put her hand, so white and small, on his forehead when he rolled his great aching head on the pillow. When he whispered she put her face close to his and it was full of sweetness and calm. When she ordered milk or medicine for him her voice was clear and did not tremble, no streak of fear ran high in it. She moved about the room like a young woman newly married, confident, quiet, and loving. Never did the boy call but she was by his side, wise and strong. When her people spoke to her, her voice answered them, yet it seemed as though they spoke to some proxy of the Princess. She was not there behind her eyes. She was not concerned with those to whom she spoke. They wondered at her and were a little afraid.

The boy grew delirious. He was bled, but he only weakened under the treatment. Dr. Radcliffe, the old physician who had attended Anne ever since she was a girl, arrived and inspected him grimly. "Scarlet fever," he growled. "Who bled the child?" The physician in waiting confessed that he had.

"Then you have destroyed him and you may finish him, for I will not prescribe," said Radcliffe and tramped off. Radcliffe had no love for Anne, but he never spared himself to save a life, if a life could be saved.

Even this did not shake the Princess. She gave orders then for Lord Marlborough to be summoned. There was no more to be done. She went back to the boy's bed, sat down beside it and smiled again as he opened his eyes. She told him he need not be frightened; but the boy was delirious and tossed in bed, sat up, tried to rise. Anne laid him down and stroked his forehead. After a while he slept and she took her seat again beside the bed. Her eyes did not leave his face and she did not move.

Anne's son died five days after his birthday. When the physician straightened himself and told her her child was dead, Anne rose from her chair by the bed and passed out of the room. She walked back quite slowly and erect from the chamber to which she had gone five days before and still she did not tremble or cry out. Only her mouth twitched a little.

When she came to her chamber she sat down at the writing-table and very carefully chose a pen from the Japanese standish. She had been away; her body had been empty of herself a long time. Now she was returning to her own habitation and she remembered many things. Fear and remorse came crowding back with her pain and loneliness. She wanted a Stuart—

but every Stuart was far away. Her last child had been taken from her ; her last happiness. Had they taken him in revenge ? There were debts to pay—or had Gloucester paid all her debts ?

Having selected her pen she wrote very slowly to her father. She formed each word with difficulty. She told him of her loss, and as she wrote she cried and her tears fell on the paper. She vowed a Stuart should follow her to the throne ; her brother should reign in England ; yes, if she lost her crown for him, a Stuart should come back to England.

“YOUR poor, faithful, unfortunate Mrs. Morley,” wrote Anne and laid down her pen. This was the fourth letter she had written to the Countess that day. This writing of letters was an unsatisfactory business ; the more she wrote the more need there was to write, but she never felt happy, now, away from her writing-table. There was always some question to be settled, some appointment fixed more securely to the minute of the hour. Now, when there seemed to be a roughness in their relationship, Anne needed assurance every minute that Mrs. Freeman still existed for her ; she must *know* her love would not fail. Anne was more anxious than she would admit about her friendship with the Countess. Just a little explanation on each side every time a disagreement arose, just a little more patience and the friction would be smoothed away, Anne knew. Yet the extra ounce of patience always happened to be missing, there was some accident which prevented true communication ; Anne was fretful with ill-health or the Countess was anxious over some move in Parliament—meanwhile the peril of estrangement was extending itself unduly. The situation was so nearly rightable. There was, of course, nothing fundamentally wrong between them, Anne never questioned this, but she was fearful lest by some horrible accident they should forget how to walk exactly in step again. She wrote letter after letter, made advance after advance to adjust matters from one angle and then from another. For it was not possible to live without Sarah. The plant might injure its roots against the stones in the soil, but it could not withdraw them and grow alone above the ground.

Ever since Gloucester’s death Anne had felt her glory

shrinking. A halo which had surrounded her, and had drawn a peculiar respect towards her, had been torn. Now through the rents in this veil of consequence came creeping little cold airs, glances, gestures—it was impossible to define them. A year ago she had represented a Royal House ; she was the matriarch of a body of people. Now she was the Princess of Denmark who would one day come to the throne (if she outlived the King), reign for a short while, die and be forgotten, while her throne was passed on to some other applicant. Already they were talking about her successor, Parliament was discussing drawing up an Act of Settlement whereby the crown was to be settled on her cousin Princess Sophia of Hanover or her son George, when Anne died. William was in Holland now making some plans of his own about the matter, plotting no one knew what conspiracies with the old woman. He might be planning a marriage of his own, even yet. Worst of all, some said he was scheming to adopt the boy at St. Germain's. Anne grew hot with anger when she considered all this scheming and debating ; why, she might even bear a son yet. They would kill her before they crowned her ! Nevertheless they *would* crown her and she would reign, too, as a Stuart monarch should, with justice and mercy and wisdom, with wise friends to love and support her.

This brusqueness of Mrs. Freeman's, which she thought she saw reflected in others about the Court—it must be her imagination. Anne shivered a little at her writing-table. Was safety so much, after all, to ask of life ?

There was a scratch at the door and Mrs. Hill entered. Anne's face lightened. She was warming to Mrs. Abigail, this poor relation of the Countess's who had

been craved a place, rather deprecatingly, by Sarah a year or so before. She was clumsy, as the Countess said, apologetically, but the poor girl had no home and no family influence and she meant well. The Countess had so many matters at home to attend to, it was hard for her to be always at Court, and she had trained this Abigail girl to carry out her duties. Anne found her a very satisfactory handmaid. She cared less than most of the ladies about personal appearance and Mrs. Hill's red nose and large hands did not annoy her. On the other hand she was quiet and sympathetic, and she was always at hand. There was some responsive quality in Abigail, too, that made Anne inclined to confide in her. She felt a little guilty, for she had sometimes said more than she meant to tell ; but Abigail seemed to be the soul of discretion.

"I have the squib, Madam," said Abigail in the deferential tone that Anne appreciated in these uncertain days. Anne commanded her to read :

"Strange news, strange news ! The Jacks of the City
Have got," cried Joan, "but we mind not tales—
That our good King, through wonderful pity,
Will leave his crown to the Prince of Wales,
That peace may be stronger still,
And that they no longer may rebel."

"Pish, 'tis a jest !" cried Gillian of Croydon,
Gillian, fair Gillian, bright Gillian of Croydon,
"Take off your glass !" cries Gillian of Croydon—
"Here's a health to our master Will !"

recited Abigail.

"But for one of these there are six of the others," said Anne doubtfully.

"Such stuff is written for a price, Madam," said

Abigail decisively. "My cousin Mr. Harley told me to-day there was no doubt of it, Parliament will have attainted the boy over the water before the year is out. They are conferring on a clause too, he says, to protect you as heir apparent from conspiracy and the rest. While the King is trying to persuade St. Germain's how excellent a father he could be to a certain little boy, the country will have put a price on the boy's head. This he knows, and so does St. Germain's. They say," said Abigail suddenly, softly, "some say, the Princess of Denmark would, even more gladly than the King, see the boy back in England, yes and on the throne."

"It is not true," screamed Anne, "the boy is not even my father's son—he's a Papist . . ." Her words began to tumble over each other. Since the Countess was so much away and since the shock of Gloucester's death, she had not been able to maintain so successfully her indifference when St. Germain's was mentioned, or when her own activities were questioned. She had overstepped the mark, she knew, and crammed down inside her the remembrance of the letter she had written to her father when Gloucester died. It had been a moment of sheer madness.

"I am tired of all this statecraft," said Anne sullenly; "does Lady Marlborough come here to-morrow?"

"She is busy," said Abigail very gently, "I had no word. But if your Highness commands . . ."

"I have no commands," put in Anne quickly, "but I need help, every day, every minute."

Abigail nodded. There was pity in her eyes. Anne did not know whether she was grateful for the support or resented the impertinence. "Have this letter sent," she said a trifle haughtily.

The Countess did come to St. James's next day. She

was casual and little disposed to settle down to a quiet talk with Anne. The Princess longed to discuss their relationship at length, to ask questions, plead, cry a little and tell the story of her sorrows. She never spoke of her grief to anyone, and she knew that many thought her heartless because she did not weep and mourn openly after her son's death. Only George knew, but he was so much stricken, so bewildered by this loss that she could not bear to speak to him of her own feelings often ; only attempted gently to distract him when they were together by talking over some subject he loved to discuss, horsemanship or military matters. He alone still clung blindly to the hope that more children would be born to them, and would live.

To-day Anne felt overladen with care. She longed to renew with Sarah the intimacy of childhood. All her friends had left her or were occupied with their own families ; she still found it as hard as it had been twenty years ago to be self-revealing with others. But Sarah had been different once, she had opened Anne's heart. Even now Anne knew she could rely on her Mrs. Freeman for judgment and guidance in State affairs. Surely she could rely on her for friendship too ?

She decided they would take a coach and ride out quietly past Kensington towards Campden House, where her child had lived so many years. They would go incognito, and, away from interruption, would talk over old times together and find serene companionship again : old endearments would come back to their lips, old jests would be remembered. This foolish estrangement, which had no source in any quarrel, would be forgotten, and all would be as it had been.

"Where are my gloves ?" called Anne to Mrs. Hill in the midst of these thoughts.

Mrs. Hill busied herself with drawers and shelves.

"I remember now. I left them in the saloon when I was speaking to Lady Marlborough. Fetch them for me, please."

Abigail slid out of the room. She was looking gloomy to-day. She was never so cheerful when the Countess was about, thought Anne. How difficult it was, first with one and then the other. . . .

She could hear Abigail speaking to the Countess in the saloon ; the door was ajar.

"I think, my lady, you have taken up her Highness's gloves by mistake."

There was a pause, Mrs. Freeman looking up from the letter she was reading when Anne left a moment ago. How she hated to be interrupted, thought Anne affectionately. Then she jerked violently. "Ah," the Countess was replying, almost crying out, "have I on anything that has touched that disagreeable woman?" There was a slap of light kid gloves being thrown to the floor. "Take them away," said Lady Marlborough sharply.

Anne steadied herself. She felt very ill. Abigail Hill appeared at the door, shut it behind her softly and came forward holding out the gloves with that peculiar expression of pity and fear in her eyes. Anne raised her head wearily and regarded her maid. For one moment she looked very like her father.

"I thank you, Mrs. Hill. After all I am not going out," she said.

Sarah never learnt of that open door and Anne and Mrs. Hill never alluded to what had been overheard ; their mutual understanding and silence leagued them together in a fashion which Anne both feared and enjoyed. Meanwhile her relationship with the Countess continued

as before. The memory of Sarah's words lay at the bottom of her heart while she tried her best to overlay it with whatever kindness and endearments she could glean from her old friend in these arid days. Not many weeks had passed before she had almost convinced herself that what she had heard was insignificant; half a dozen sour words picked from the long years of caresses meant nothing after all. She would forget them, she *must* forget them. And yearning to reinstate Sarah as unerring adjudicator of right and wrong, of loyalty and disloyalty, she arranged her personal attitudes to her friend so that for a while at least the Countess must shine forth. Anne asked her advice more often than usual even, made little faltering mistakes, withdrew, deferred, flattered, worshipped. And, as the year drew on and reports of the King's health grew worse, the Countess did resume some of her old cordiality, the old friendliness seemed to creep back into her voice. Anne soon convinced herself that things were as they had been years before. With scarcely a qualm she continued to write daily to dearest Mrs. Freeman, signing herself still "your poor, faithful, unfortunate Mrs. Morley."

In the midst of Anne's struggles, of the dissensions in Parliament over the proposed attainder of young James Stuart, cutting through the Jacobite schemes, and William's own secret negotiations with the old King for adopting the boy, came news of James II's death. It caused a slight embarrassment among those in authority. Had he been loved, the situation might have been easier; as they had no affection for him personally his relations seemed to feel more urgently the decorum of wearing mourning. William after a day's silence put himself into sables, but intimated that he did not expect the Court of England to do the same. Nevertheless the Court did

follow the fashion, and most of England paid respect to the memory of the King they had hated and the man they had despised. Anne herself went into full mourning again, having scarcely cast it off for her son. She had felt the devastation of real grief for Gloucester ; now she did not find it so easy to assume the attitude of grief for her father. His death, so far away, frightened her a little. It was too dangerously easy—this quiet removal from her of a man she still, in nightmares, dreamt she might have to meet. Now she would never have to render her account to him ; never have to face his accusing eyes. She spoke discreet and appropriate words about him to those around and tried to put him and his death out of her head while she followed keenly the measures taken in Parliament against his son.

She was her brother's rival now ; George of Hanover or his mother might be appointed the official heirs to the throne, but in Anne's mind the fight lay between her and James Stuart in France. Now, after years of waiting, after terror and suspense and grief, the throne lay just within her grasp. The dreams of childhood, the hopes which had sustained her through all her humiliations, were to be realised. The King was ailing, weakening day by day. In a few months she would be Queen of England ; Whitehall, Kensington, Hampton Court, and Windsor, would all be hers. The crowds would throng about her coach, she would be prayed for in all the churches, " Our gracious Queen Anne . . . "

She knew she would be a good Queen ; she would be a mother to her people, a protector of the Church. She would guide her subjects. With Mrs. Freeman's help she would make just laws, while her councillors stood about her, admiring and worshipping her for her wisdom. That summer and autumn of 1701 Anne

set herself to study history ; she read heavy books, asked naïve questions of her uncle Rochester and of the Marquis of Normanby. But she found the subject very difficult. She drove about London a great deal too, visiting churches or places of interest, chatting with old soldiers, smiling at doorkeepers. She loved her poor ; they were so helpless and so grateful. That Christmas she distributed alms to nearly all the parishes in London, and when the poor-house keepers thanked her bewilderedly she nearly wept with pity and love.

It was easier and pleasanter to give alms and visit her people than to read history. Anne's study hours shrank week by week, and after a month or so she decided to put her books aside till she had more leisure for the subject. Towards the end of February 1702 the King suddenly became really ill. While riding in Hampton Court home park, he had been thrown from his horse which tripped over a molehill. He had broken his collar-bone—not such a serious matter, yet his convalescence was unduly protracted. Soon rumours were afloat, though official bulletins were emphatically cheerful. Jacobites rejoiced and toasted the “ little gentleman in black velvet ” who had caused the fall. The Countess of Marlborough became very much animated ; ran hither and thither and brought Anne the latest unofficial news of the King's health. Eventually a messenger came from Kensington to St. James's to say that the King's breath grew shorter each hour. Anne asked permission to see her brother-in-law ; the King answered simply :

“ No ! ”

The Prince of Denmark attempted to enter the royal bedchamber, but was repulsed. There was nothing to do but wait. Throughout the night of March 7th

William
was 52

Anne did wait, with the Countess beside her, while messages arrived hourly from Lord Jersey at the Palace, that the King was sinking. A crowd of people waited silently outside St. James's and were the first to see, at eight o'clock, a coach drive furiously up to the Palace, as the first sunny day of the year broke over the City. Lord Essex, the lord of the bedchamber, descended and hurried in to the Queen. He had scarcely gone in when another coach drew up and Bishop Burnet, casting ecclesiastical dignity aside, jumped out and tore through the entrances after him. There was silence for a while, then came the toll of a single bell ; a hundred bells followed on, taking up the slow, deep tone. There was murmuring and scuffling in the crowd. The King was dead. The Queen reigned.

PART THREE

PART III

I

A WAY in the western outskirts of London, set among trees and commanding the half-dozen cottages and little church that made up the hamlet of Kensington, stood the Queen's Palace. Guards stood by the doors, gentlemen of grave demeanour, finely dressed and heavily wigged, passed in and out of its doors, talking to each other in low voices. Inside the Palace from some of the smaller rooms came the hum of voices—meetings held to prepare some statement for the Queen's attention. Up and down the stairs ran pages with small boxes appertaining to the royal toilet. In the upper corridor, leaning against the wooden balustrade, a couple of gentlemen waited for the Queen to leave her apartment. By the Queen's chamber ladies waited for pages to bring them their little burdens, took them and swept into the room.

The Queen of England was nearly dressed. The high panelled room was ringed round with ladies-in-waiting in attitudes of respectful attention. The Queen was about to don her head-dress. Mrs. Hill, her bedchamber lady, handed the fontange to the bedchamber woman who stood by the Sovereign. This high three tiered lace cap was placed on the Queen's head. There was a pause. The lady of the bedchamber received the fan from another attendant, passed it again to the woman of the bedchamber, who curtsied and offered it to the Queen. A page came forward with a basin and ewer and set it upon a side table. The woman of the bedchamber lifted the table and set it before the Queen ; knelt down upon the other side and poured the water over the Queen's hands.

Queen Anne washed her hands with scented washballs and dried them on a linen napkin. The page of the backstairs came forward, knelt and put on her Majesty's shoes ; it was a little difficult to slip them on easily. The Queen had gout and her feet were no longer slender and narrow. Yet she smiled gently at the boy and he felt no embarrassment.

Anne had no thought for the page or for her ladies, not even for the chocolate which was brought her on the knee. Her head was heavy with many matters, hardly anxieties, just considerations which would not let her rest. The Duchess of Marlborough was to come to Kensington that day—and for all she had suffered of unrest and distress from Mrs. Freeman, Anne's heart still gave the old familiar leap of pleasure at the thought. Now, though, she wondered why it did so. There were always so many causes for disagreement between them ; more and more often did she remember and dismiss again hastily, those words overheard, seven years ago ; passing words of passing irritation, that was all. But it was harder to overlay them now. There was more, however, than Mrs. Freeman's moods to worry her. There were Whigs everywhere ; the Church was in danger—how could it not be, with Whigs in power ?—and she was still alone, unsupported, letting slip one prerogative after another to these quick, clever people so much stronger and determined than herself. Desperately she clasped what power she had. Still, at least, she was the Church's protector. Yes, though Mrs. Freeman wrote a dozen letters a day urging this or that preferment ; that is my province alone, said Anne, and felt her heart beating furiously with the fear of contradiction.

There were so many clever people—Anne did not try



Her Grace the Duchess of Marlborough

Painted by Sir Godfrey Kneller, 1704. Engraved by J. Smith, 1727.

to understand what was happening. She had found State affairs in such a condition and such people to advise her. They must know best, for a while at least, till she had time to catch up, unravel the tangles of government. The war she had inherited must, of course, go on, and Mrs. Freeman must continue to conduct it, as the late King had decreed. But having agreed to this, Anne found there were a thousand implications involved to which she had not meant to commit herself. That was the way of government. No one question was settled by itself, there was some trap attached to its disposal that necessitated a whole order of things. Anne did not like the order of things which this strange war necessitated. Still there were men who understood all this. When she herself saw an ill to be remedied or a good deed to do, she made her will known, and what little joy she had she found in doing these small acts of queenliness. Nearly all affairs of State were conducted by these old statesmen. They had advised her bounty to the Clergy, for instance ; they had gently put before her this scheme for the union of Scotland, which she heartily approved and would gladly have conceived herself (for we must somehow find amity and peace, amity and peace, sighed Queen Anne). There was so little for her to do. Those schemes they had talked of as girls, she and the Duchess, years back when her father was reigning, those splendid acts were strangely removed from the Sovereign's benevolent hands. Those deeds of mercy and justice by which her people were to know and bless her had shrunk—to what ? To the reprieving of a couple of pitiful deserters ; to a proclamation here and there for better conduct in the theatres ; for the better lighting of streets.

Such acts as these bore the imprint of the Sovereign's

will ; matters of war and peace, matters which drove the nation forward or held it back, were ruled by powers already provided in the hands of gentlemen already in place. There were those who understood these things. Anne, discovering this, felt relieved and chagrined. She would have been glad to lay her hand to weighty affairs, but so far the affairs never lay accessible to her. But when, during some discussion almost incomprehensible to her, a familiar name, a phrase, caught her ears, she lifted her head, showed the dead obstinacy in her eyes. A name she loved or hated kindled a fire in her ; something sprang to life.

So the Tory Parliament had discovered when they tried to slight the Duke of Marlborough after Blenheim (for by gaining a great victory in the Whig war, it seemed that he had strengthened the Whig Party just as their enemies hoped to confound them). So discovered the Tory party this very year when they had brought forward a motion to invite over the Electress Sophia to visit her future realm. Anne might mutely realise that she had agreed to the Act of Settlement, but she would not yet tolerate any mention of the Hanoverians. That incident of Prince George's courtship, years ago, still rankled. The Duchess of Marlborough found that what her pleas for patriotism could not do for the Whig party, the Tories could effect by this tactlessness. After their reference to Sophia, Anne felt for once drawn to the Whigs ; " I believe dear Mrs. Freeman and I shall not disagree as we have formerly done, for I am sensible of the services that people have done me that you have a good opinion of," she wrote. But Anne's natural aversion to the Whigs could not long be stifled. Already she was veering round to her beloved Tories again.

Mrs. Freeman understood these things, thought Anne, stirring her chocolate. Her ladies stood around silently as she sat sipping from her china cup. The youngest shifted quietly on her feet, she knew the Queen did not greatly care for talk. The Court, said the older ladies, was dull now, but then the Queen was kind, so gentle, almost timid. . . . Mrs. Freeman, thought Anne, had always known things, from her husband or her friends—Godolphin, for instance. She had grown to womanhood in the company of men who discussed politics. It was sweet to agree with her. If only a little agreement would suffice ; but the Duchess seemed to want her to render up those few darling prerogatives which remained to her. She only asked to keep control of matters which pertained to her own safety or to the Church. She only wanted safety and her own friends about her ; those, thought Anne, her heart beating against the suffocation of impotent anger, those she *would* have, to guard her. She sighed, remembering that to-day, when she had been happy in anticipation of the Duchess's visit, she should have realised its meaning. Mrs. Freeman was coming, of course, to discuss the appointment of that Whig atheist, Sir William Cowper, as Lord Keeper, of young Sunderland, crafty son of a shifty father, to the Cabinet. Whigs, both of them ; sly Low Church, anti-monarchists. Tories might err, but Whigs would never be the friends of sovereigns. Anne knew all the Duchess's arguments : "the health of the nation . . . the success of the war . . . your Majesty's ministers earnestly implore you. . . ." But she was not inclined to interfere with these matters, Anne would persist ; there were those who looked after such things. The appointments of Sunderland and Cowper touched her personally. They

were names she knew and hated. Mrs. Freeman would never be able to make her understand that the particular appointment of these men, or others that she hated, had its place in the conduct of the nation's affairs. No, she would not accept them. And then, thought Anne, shivering, would come a silence between her and Mrs. Freeman, in which the wave of anger would gather, heap up, and crash down; "Lord, Madam, it *must* be so . . ."

There was a shuffle outside the door. Ladies moved out, came in. Mrs. Hill came up, curtsied. Her Majesty's old nurse, Mrs. Buss, begged to see her Majesty alone for a moment. Anne dismissed the ladies; old Mrs. Buss hobbled in, bobbed and fumbled inside her pocket for a packet. She was trying to say something.

"From St. Germain's?" asked Anne very low, and took the package. She opened it without waiting for a reply. The parcel was carefully sealed. Anne undid it steadily, her lips pressed together. Inside was a painted miniature of her half-brother. His great eyes, so clearly Stuart, looked out at her comprehendingly. His skin was white and transparent, the blue veins showed through on the high forehead. He was so like Gloucester, so like young Edgar, the brother she could scarcely remember; so much a Stuart.

She was so lonely—the muscles at the corners of her mouth pulled suddenly downwards, her throat filled up. With a quick movement she dismissed the old woman; the miniature fell to her lap as she put her hands up to her mouth to stifle the sound of her sobbing.

If there were only someone old enough, kind enough to tell all the trouble to.

After a while, Anne heard Mrs. Hill's particular

scratch at her door. She dried her eyes, shook her head and slipped the miniature behind her lace tucker.

"Her Grace the Duchess waits to attend your Majesty," said Abigail softly.

"I am ready," said Anne, and added, "I am tired."

"I know, Madam. . . ."

II

ONCE again Anne found herself fleeing from the denouncing voice, the admonitory finger. Again she was guilty—but of no crime, seeking shelter from unauthorised justice. Years before she had hidden and lied with the hope of gain at the end. Now she conspired to be rid of persecution. The old game of deception came easily to hand : never to admit to oneself the end one followed ; never to see with conscious eyes the evasions one made. Now, as before, there were friends for support ; friends less strong, less determined than the friends she had leaned upon before '88, but craftier nevertheless, better fitted to play the game as Anne herself was inclined to play it, timidly, secretly. The Duchess was often away at Woodstock now, where the Queen had persuaded the nation to build their hero, the Duke of Marlborough, a magnificent palace ; the Duke himself was abroad fighting ; Godolphin and the rest busied themselves over public affairs ; so there was time for long comforting talks with Mrs. Hill and her delightful cousin, Mr. Harley, who came quietly up the back stairs of Windsor without any embarrassment at all.

Mr. Harley hated the Whigs too, though he filled a post in their Government (for since the Earl of Sunderland had been admitted to the Cabinet, Sarah had had her way—there was no further pretence about there being a Tory Cabinet). Mr. Harley felt deeply the drain on the country's pockets, and he had several statesmanlike reasons for his attitude. The Tories, he agreed, were the Sovereign's friends in the end. He tossed little notions into his conversations with the Queen, speculations, surmises ; they turned strangely often to one

subject, the triumph of the Tories, the liberation of the Queen from those ambitious ones who kept her impotent. But so delightful a man was he, he never spoke long on tedious subjects, and he was as sensitive to the Queen's tastes as he was to her politics. Nearly every time he came he brought something to divert her, an amusing broadsheet, a song, a recipe for cooking oysters, and frequently he introduced rising young musicians so that after their talk he and the Queen and Abigail could enjoy a little music with a cup of chocolate or tea. These conferences gave Anne assurance. She never spoke of them to anyone else. A tacit agreement to keep silence was made between the three of them. Once Abigail, tripping through the private door from the garden to announce Mr. Harley, stopped short on seeing the Duchess with the Queen and said, without a sign from her mistress, "Did your Majesty ring?" making a solemn curtsy. Mrs. Freeman looked up sharply, but Anne had not changed countenance and no questions were asked.

It was not possible to tell the Duchess how comforting and helpful was her protégée Mrs. Hill. Confidence placed in such a person was a betrayal of the old friendship with the Duchess perhaps; Anne felt guilty and knew not why. A situation had grown up, a relationship with Mrs. Hill had evolved, during the last few years, since Sarah had become so cool and domineering—and this situation had developed too far now to be casually broached to the Duchess. Having sown these friendships secretly they must be tended secretly. There was no hope that the Duchess would approve of them; Harley, for instance, she had always called a sneaking fellow, and Abigail she simply despised.

Yet the Duchess did discover everything, that summer of 1707.

Mrs. Hill had fallen in love with Samuel Masham, a page at the Palace, and Mr. Harley had persuaded the Queen to let the two marry. Anne loved a romance. She agreed to the wedding and said she would be present herself at the ceremony. She was delighted at being made a member of so innocent a conspiracy, it assured her of their love and respect that her permission was so politely asked. The marriage was to be secret, for it might cause trouble ; in any case the Duchess, who was Mistress of the Robes and directed Abigail, had not been told, so the situation was a little delicate. Anne, happy as a child, attended the wedding in her own chapel and promised to make the couple a wedding gift from the privy purse.

After she had done so, she realised with a certain cold tremor that the Duchess must discover the secret. She held the privy purse and it was always difficult to wring from her any sum Anne wished to give in charity or gifts. And when Sarah discovered her presence at the wedding it would be useless to pretend that Abigail Masham was not a very special confidante of her Queen.

So it happened. The week after the marriage, the Duchess's suspicions were awakened. It was an agonising time for Anne. Sarah watched every look that she and Abigail exchanged, watched Abigail's every entrance and exit, asked questions so casually that Anne found herself admitting a thousand little clues. Mr. Harley's afternoon talks, Abigail's kindness, the wedding, the secrecy—the Duchess uncovered all. Anne shrank into herself with fear. The time would come soon now when she would be confronted with all Sarah had discovered, from herself, from her pages, from the other

ladies of the bedchamber ; then she would have to render an account.

Anne avoided being alone with the Duchess as long as possible. Then came an afternoon when she found herself trapped.

"You used to say, Madame," began the Duchess gently, "when you were desired to keep anything a secret you would, however, tell me, because, as Montaigne observed, telling a thing to a friend is only telling oneself. Yet you kept the secret of my cousin Mrs. Hill marrying Mr. Masham a long time from me."

Anne stayed silent, face unmoved. Her intelligence had fled away.

"But the only thing I am concerned at," went on the Duchess, her voice rising a little, "is that it plainly shows a change in your Majesty towards me, as I have once before observed to you."

If only she would go ! At last trouble had come, exposure, accusation ! Anne did not look at the Duchess ; her own voice was strangely even for all her fear.

"It is not I who have changed, but you, and if you are the same to me, I am sure I am the same to you," answered Anne. Then as the accusing silence widened, she cried out like a child denying a theft, "I believe I have spoken to Masham a hundred times to tell you of the marriage, but she would not."

The Duchess jerked her head back. She looked angry and yet satisfied. "A hundred times," she said softly. Anne turned red. More than ever before she had betrayed the situation between her and the bedchamber lady by that phrase. "It was very natural," she insisted ; the Duchess smiled, ever so slightly. "It was very natural and I am very much in the right."

The Duchess simply curtsied and left the room.

But quarrels and revelations did not ever, as Anne had found before, cut things in two, shut things up. Indeed they only opened doors through which a thousand mischiefs might escape. There were many interviews yet to be gone through ; the Duchess with Abigail, Abigail with the Queen, the Duchess with the Queen, Harley, more secret than ever, with the Queen and Abigail. The Duchess went off with her story, and all the conclusions she had drawn from it, to the gentlemen of the Privy Council. Lord Godolphin saw the Queen, lectured her mildly on the disloyalty of her conduct. But Anne could only be got sulkily to agree. Very well then, Abigail had been wrong in speaking to her of affairs of State, and she herself had been unwise to discuss such things behind the backs of her ministers with her friends. But Anne was too frightened for caution and her tone was unsubmissive. Besides Harley was reassuring her. His friends and hers were nearly ready to knock down the Whigs' castle.

Eventually the same thing happened as happened so often before. Mrs. Freeman quieted down ; letters passed back and forth, Anne coaxed her into a kind of gentleness, gave her presents, and, when the Duchess had teased and scolded, even made over to her the lease of the Queen Dowager's portion of St. James's Palace. Anne's heart was wrung when Sarah began to root up trees her uncle had planted, and pull down the stones which she had known from her childhood, but the Duchess's anger was a bitter thing to bear and her pleasure still soothed and comforted Anne.

Except when she was in fear of being caught out, put in the wrong, her heart still went out to her old friend. But these times came more and more infre-

quently, for when Sarah was at Court she was so obviously suspicious, would come into rooms suddenly, watch keenly every communication the Queen had with other friends. Still, when she was absent, Anne would write to her in the old desperate fashion, playing still on some chord of past friendship :

“ MY DEAR MRS. FREEMAN,

“ I cannot go to bed without renewing the request which I have often made, that you would banish all unkind and unjust thoughts of your poor, unfortunate, faithful Morley. I saw by the glimpse I had of you yesterday, that you were full of 'em. Indeed I did not deserve 'em, and if you could see my heart, you would find it as sincere, as tender and passionately fond of you as ever ; and as truly sensible of your kindness in telling me your mind freely upon all occasions. Nothing shall ever alter me.

“ Though we have the misfortune to differ in some things, I will ever be the same to my dear *dear* Mrs. Freeman, who I do assure once more, I am more tenderly and sincerely hers than it is possible ever to express.”

Then there would be another quarrel, such as the one at Christmas time, 1707, when the Duchess burst into Anne's apartments, just after Anne, thinking her busy, had sent for Abigail to ask news of Mr. Harley. Abigail had not yet come to the room, but Anne could think of nothing but that she would come, any moment, perhaps with some betraying letter, and she, Anne, would be caught again, conspiring with a servant with whom she had promised never again to discuss any matters save those of the toilet. Anne stood helpless, looking at Sarah. The Duchess was furious. “ I am sorry I

have happened to come so unseasonably," she cried and made her curtsy. Anne tried to speak and could not ; she went to the Duchess and confusedly took her hand. The Duchess tried formally to kiss hers. Anne was terribly embarrassed ; she had never felt so awkward ; she could think of nothing to do to cover her embarrassment but to kiss Sarah. But the kiss, she knew, was hasty and cold. Sarah, with hate in her eyes, flounced out of the room and slammed the door. The next day she sent a letter.

“ *December 27th, 1707.*

“ If Mrs. Morley will be so just as to reflect and examine impartially her last reception of Mrs. Freeman, how very different from what it has been formerly when *you* were glad to see *her* come in, and sorry when she went away, certainly *you* can't wonder at her reproaches upon an embrace that seemed to have no satisfaction in it, but that of getting rid of her, in order to enjoy the conversation of one that has the good fortune to please you better. . . . ”

A few weeks later came a letter from the Duke. Anne scarcely dared read it lest his reasonableness, which she had once respected so highly, weaken her away from her new allies and put doubts into her mind. But as she read it she kept in mind all the anxieties and persecutions she had endured, and rejoiced to find that Mr. Harley's assurances could stiffen her resolution against even this hero of her youth.

The time was fast approaching when the mine was to be sprung beneath the Whig cabal. Though Mr. Harley had to be more discreet than ever in his visits to the Palace, he was still able to come sufficiently

often to keep Anne posted as to his hopes and plans. The country was sick of war and there had been a defeat of the English troops at Almanza that set the people's minds ready for a change.

Matters were to be brought to a crisis. Harley's treachery was no longer a secret to his colleagues, and the Queen received word from Marlborough and Godolphin that they would absent themselves from the council room if Mr. Harley continued to attend. Everything had been arranged. Anne immediately called a council meeting to which Harley was invited, and appeared herself at the board, trembling inwardly, but wearing the expression of dull obstinacy which ministers were beginning to know and dread. There was some hesitation. Anne opened the meeting. The ministers gazed at each other ; eyebrows were raised, finger-nails tapped the polished surface of the table. Harley rose to speak. Anne wondered—could they carry it through? Was sovereignty great enough still to impose itself on government? There were murmurs at the lower end of the table. Then in the middle of Harley's speech, the "proud" Duke of Somerset rose from his seat. "While the General and the Lord Treasurer are absent," he said crisply, "I do not see how we can proceed with the present deliberations. And if this fellow is suffered to treat of affairs of war without advice of the General, I cannot serve the Queen."

They had failed after all. The meeting broke up. Anne withdrew quickly, without a word, and heard, as the door shut behind her, the outbreak of voices released in indignation. It was surely failure this time, for a while.

The next day Harley, still composed and pleasant, received his dismissal from her.

Anne's feelings changed greatly towards her old friends after the humiliation of the council room. During the year of 1708 she was flicked by a hundred anxieties, large and small, and the angry intrusions of the Duchess seemed more irritating than regrettable. Sarah buzzed about the royal apartments like an indignant fly; now furiously demanding why Mrs. Masham had trespassed on her rooms at Kensington; now nagging about some appointment of a lady-in-waiting that she favoured; now scolding the Queen for some petty expenditure. The Duchess must be brushed away somehow—yet one might as easily try to brush away the Tower of London. Anne took refuge in dumbness. "This is not true," she would repeat over and over, or "I cannot help it." Some force she did not comprehend but could not withstand kept the Marlboroughs and all they represented at the head of the State. So be it then. Mr. Harley still paid his charming visits, and there were, Anne knew from sympathetic nods and smiles, men and women waiting for a time to come when they would be able to be rid of this incubus, this harassing family and all its connections. Meanwhile during their ordinary intercourse in the bedchamber and at the council board, Anne kept up the courtesies, so far as the Duchess's temper would permit, and tried to avoid her company as far as possible.

Anne was worried by many things. There had been a threat of invasion in Scotland headed by young James Stuart. Anne spoke some brave speeches to Parliament in a low sweet voice which did not waver when she proclaimed the last of the Stuarts "the pretender." At home in her own apartment she wept after she had spoken this, and each day when she was brought news of the naval operations which were being carried on

against her brother in the Channel, she turned pale. She had given secret orders that the youth was to be treated carefully and set free if he were captured in one of these skirmishes, but a thousand accidents might happen.

Then there was the victory at Oudenarde ; another pillar to support the Marlborough temple. Anne felt sickeningly weary of the war. "Oh, Lord, when will all this dreadful bloodshed cease?" she cried, when they brought her the dispatches, but she dutifully thanked the Duke and went to St. Paul's to give thanks. Sarah quarrelled with her loudly all the way to the cathedral, because she had not been consulted on the jewels of the day, and even as they alighted and Anne turned to answer her, snapped "Do not answer me." Anne wearily stored up the insult. She was enduring many such.

But like a deep pain beneath all these lesser worries was her anxiety for George's health. George was growing old. He was enormously fat and almost paralysed with gout, terrifyingly asthmatic. He could hardly move or speak most of the time. Anne pushed aside State affairs and tended him. She made him take innumerable bottles of medicine—every cupboard in every royal residence had shelves full of them—tried doctor after doctor. They went to Windsor to the cottage she had there, for peace, but the summer was too hot, he only lay and coughed and gasped. They went to the Wells for the waters, finally to Bath. They enjoyed this visit. Youths and girls came out to meet their coach, clad all in green and white ; the Mayor received them with speeches. Everyone seemed to love them personally. George took his bath in the elegant royal bathhouse, drank more medicine and

announced himself much improved in health. So they came home and Anne settled him in some apartments on the ground floor of Kensington Palace (so that he could avoid climbing stairs) which looked out on to the gardens. Everyone was so glad that he was better. Letters came pouring in ; addresses, odes. Anne's heart went out to her people. They understood her. She wished she could speak to them herself, tell them George's symptoms, his bad nights, his remedies, how he loved his garden.

She tried to forget the Marlboroughs, Cabinets, and the war. She and George would spend the evening after their three o'clock dinner, and after State affairs had been disposed of, sitting in his room looking out at the trees now turning yellow in the autumn frost. Sometimes he would walk very slowly, leaning on her arm, out to the enclosed garden he had tended so carefully and go about its tiny terraces scrutinising the last autumn flowers. A page would follow with some tools. George had a special set of gardening tools ; he kept them in a cupboard in his room, but now he was too ill to use them himself. " Rake over the soil a little there, boy," he would say, pointing with his stick to a bed ; or he and Anne would discuss the placing of bulbs for next year's spring, hyacinths there, a group of lilies here. Then they would walk back between the box hedges, stopping to speak to a gardener, who took off his hat and bowed low as the Prince and Queen beamed at him and asked what he was clipping at, a horse or dog, perhaps, with a really life-like tail ? All out of box ! Then evening would creep up between the trees, and the lanterns which lit the way through the park would come to flower, one after another, down the avenue of tree trunks and burn clear and yellow, though they swung

a little in the wind. Then Anne would urge George to turn back, for the night air was chilly.

As October went on, however, George grew more and more inactive. He had to keep to his bed. He would be overtaken by terrible fits of suffocation, would gasp and gasp for breath, making terrible groaning noises. Anne would run to him then, raise him in her arms and call sharply for Mrs. Masham in the next room. She could not bear to see George suffer, his childlike eyes so puzzled by the pain, his great face purple with choking. He pleaded with her between his gasps, to leave him and rest herself, she was too tired. But she would not go. She sat all day by his side, except when she was called to State affairs, talking on those homely impersonal subjects they both loved; riding and past chases, trees and flowers and gardens. They made statements to each other, compared one fact with another dispassionately, reminded each other of some past experience. Every day George grew weaker, the attacks closed over him more and more often. He was exhausted by them and she could not give him strength.

By the end of October Anne knew her husband was dying. On the 25th he was almost unconscious. Tending him, Anne was suddenly shocked by receiving a letter from the Duchess. "Though the last time I had the honour to wait upon your Majesty, your usage of me was such as was scarce possible for me to imagine, or anyone to believe . . ." Anne hardly noticed what was written; she had no thoughts for it and turned back to the Prince. Then she heard the Duchess's voice behind her. She turned fiercely around. She had only one thought now; there was no strength left to consider the courtesy she rated so high, no strength

even for caution. "Withdraw," she said low and fierce, "*Withdraw!*" She had no mind even to notice if the Duchess had obeyed her, but she heard the door shut.

She watched by the Prince drawing his last difficult groaning breaths. She wished he had not to labour so with breathing, it was so hard for him. Each breath was the most difficult task of his whole life. If only he need not breathe! And in an hour or so it happened that he did not have to breathe, and he rested. . . .

After the doctors had gone, Anne sat by the bed comprehending that he was dead. Very fully she understood it. She wept and wrung her hands in sorrow for his death, in pity for him. Here was her strength all for him, ready for him, but she could not help him; he had suffered death.

Later the Duchess came in, quietly now, and spoke to her gently, though Anne knew nothing of it; all speech was simply inconvenient and distracting words. She could not give her attention to the Duchess. She did not look at her, only continued weeping and rubbing her hands one over the other. The Duchess knelt by her, beside the great canopied bed, under the candlelight. "Will your Majesty please go to St. James's Palace?" Anne was roused for a moment. "I will stay here at Kensington," she replied dully. Now above all she wished to shun the populous world, the voices, the demands, the footsteps along corridors, the scratching at doors. But as Sarah insisted, though still gently, Anne woke from her trance. There was still the world; it continued and she could not slip from it. She would have to go back. The old grip of custom and ceremony was strong. She could not stay here by George. They would never allow it. There would be trouble.

She roused herself. She took off her watch and handed it to the Duchess. "Don't come in to me before the hand of my watch comes to this place," she pointed, "and send Masham to me."

The Duchess left her. Anne went back to the bedside. She did not notice that Masham never came. She had asked for her because she felt the gentle presence of Abigail might help her more easily to return to the world of ungentle people. She sat drawing herself together, carefully remembering what she must do next; the precedences for grief, for vigils, for funerals. She faced her loneliness and the burdens of the coming years, and she did not know that she neither trembled nor sought in her mind for protection from peril. She was so much alone that there was no use for fear. She was so clothed with sorrow that there was no room for apprehension.

Sarah came back at the appointed time. "I did not send for Mrs. Masham, Madam, for I thought it would make a disagreeable noise when there are bishops and ladies of the bedchamber without, that your Majesty did not care to see, and you might send *yourself* to come to St. James's when you please."

Anne only nodded. Like some echo of a time long past she vaguely realised that the Duchess had been using this occasion, too, to play off her grudge against Abigail. But this was unimportant. "Bring my hood," she said, and when they had dressed themselves she took Sarah's arm and they passed through the rooms away from the Prince's apartments. Through the unending series of doorways they passed, silencing groups of ladies and gentlemen of the household as they went, clerics, soldiers, statesmen; through the corridors where the servants stood lining the walls, their eyes

tender for her. Anne smiled at Masham, who stood among them, stopped her progress and gave an order about the dogs. They passed through the entrance, and with her hand on the door of the coach, Anne stopped again. She was being very careful now, thinking of everything she could, in good order.

“Send to Lord Godolphin,” she said to the Duchess, “and beg him to take care and examine whether there is room in some vault to bury the Prince at Westminster and leave room for me too.” Then she stepped up into the coach. The Duchess went with her to St. James’s. Anne did not speak very much, but suffered the Duchess to give her a supper. She asked her to bring some documents pertaining to royal burials. When Sarah had left at last, Anne sat by her table and read these through, long, difficult descriptions, data of ceremonies and precedents for the funerals of consorts. It must be right. Everything she could do, she must do; every care she could give, she would give. Every honour. . . . She thought steadily of him lying in his huge bed, lonely at Kensington, where they would not let her stay. Suddenly she took paper and pen and addressed a letter to Mrs. Freeman again; a request simply that the door might be taken down at the removing of the dear Prince’s body to Westminster, for fear the body of the dear Prince should be shook as he was carried out of the room.

III

FOR the next year Anne moved warily along the path of her hopes. She had friends, but they were not sure of their strength ; her enemies held the machinery of government. Anne tried to play her own hand sometimes, scented danger and withdrew. But a change had come over her. She had some secret withdrawing place, and the storms of Sarah's anger, the winds of Godolphin's eloquence, were defeated by her still deep obstinacy. All their strength could not pierce her silence. She had learnt to defend herself with this silence when accused. It was a sufficient defence, and it gave her courage ; the dodging timidity was disappearing as the wall of obstinacy grew thicker. " I have friends," asserted Anne one day to Mrs. Freeman, weary with an hour's lecture and a long letter. The Duchess laughed and shrugged her shoulders. " Friends ? " " Sure," cried the Queen furiously, " I may love whoever I please."

Sarah knew only too well that the Queen had friends ; so did Godolphin the Lord Treasurer, and Lord Somers, and the Duke himself, and all the harassed gentlemen who made up the Privy Council. Sarah put sentries of her own at the stairways, set pages to spy at the back entrances ; still the secret notes went out to Harley from the Queen—even though sometimes the messenger had to be the gardener sworn to secrecy. And secretly Harley would still come, as before, and tell Anne what she longed to hear, that the Duke of Marlborough was scheming to prolong the war so that he could enrich himself, that the Whigs had refused to make peace when a treaty could have been signed with honour ; that Malplaquet, the latest victory, was little more than a

defeat ; that the Church was in danger and the whole country groaned under a corrupt Whig administration. What an end for England—to be ruled by a single family !

When Harley had gone there was Mrs. Masham—so gentle, so insinuating, so very amusing with her imitations of the Duchess in a temper, or of Lord Godolphin in despair—always at the Queen's side, bringing forward her own friends for appointments at Court, outwitting Sarah at every turn. Had the Queen no sense ? The Duchess would run to Godolphin, make him listen to a long story—a familiar story : the Queen was being led like a child ; if only they could get themselves back into her confidence, *one* of them even, so that her ears would not be full, day and night, of this Tory treason ! It would be their country's ruin. There was hardly a washerwoman about the Palace now who was not a ripe Tory. And Godolphin would promise wearily to talk to the Queen, would dress himself in his best, trim his wig and fluff his ruffles (for the Queen put such store on these things and a wig awry might spoil a whole case), and present himself for audience at Kensington. Sometimes the Queen was busy in that little room of George's where she still sat in the afternoons ; then he would look suspiciously at the page. But the boys were well tutored by Mrs. Masham not to tell visitors who was visiting her Majesty. Sometimes he would be allowed to enter at once and for half an hour would patiently explain, entreat, and expostulate for the Queen's support for her own ministers ; deprecate her disloyalty to her servants ; beg her to abandon this alliance with those who were undermining the country's welfare. Anne merely gazed silently at his heavy pock-marked face and said nothing. What he said meant nothing

to her. All she wanted was to have men about her who were friendly, who upheld the things she understood, peace and the Church and respect to royalty. She could not bring these men to power all at once, it seemed, as her father or her uncle would have done, so she waited in patience till times were propitious. These others deluded themselves. Besides, they were ambitious self-seekers. Harley said so and Mrs. Masham and many others.

So to her Lord High Treasurer she would say simply, "I will consider it," and with this he had to be content. The situation remained as before. Then Mrs. Freeman would come and quarrel over some slight she thought had been offered to the Duke or some appointment which had been given to a woman in the household without her consent as Mistress of the Robes. Her temper was becoming more and more uncontrollable. Once she put her back to the door as the Queen was moving away and shouted, "You shall hear me out, for that is the least favour you can do for having put the crown on your head and kept it there." Anne kept silence. "I do not care now if I ever see your Majesty again," shrieked the Duchess. "Indeed, I think the seldomer the better," replied Anne coldly. She wondered, when Sarah released her anger, when she saw her helpless in her rage, how it was she could sometimes be so frightened of her.

After Malplaquet the Duke himself came to Anne and put before her a scheme for making him Captain-General of the Forces for life. Anne evaded a refusal; she spoke to her Lord Privy Seal, Cowper, and, Whig though he was, he declared this to be an utterly unconstitutional request. Anne, relieved, told him to say so to Marlborough. The demand frightened her, and

so did the rumours afoot soon after, that he was getting up a petition to be signed by all the army, to give him this post. A Captain-General for life ! It was the army that had made William of Orange king ; it was Marlborough at the head of the troops who had sent her father into exile. Anne summoned Harley, sent for half a dozen others, among them her Tory Scottish peers who were her special friends, and laid her anxiety before them. "Your Majesty need not be in pain ; I will undertake, if ever you command me, to seize the Duke at the head of his troops and bring him before you dead or alive," declared one of them, Argyle. This was the kind of talk Anne seldom heard nowadays and it warmed her heart. After all she had friends ; and there were signs of light ahead. Malplaquet was a costly victory ; malcontents were preaching at street corners ; there were grumblings in the taverns, and the Tory coffee houses were drinking healths in a cheerful fashion to the downfall of all Whigs. Besides this, Godolphin had come into her presence, quite inarticulate with anger, with a copy of a sermon by a Dr. Sacheverell, who had preached on non-resistance, divine right, the evil of revolutions—particularly the last, it was understood—the vice of Whigs, and had ended up with some shocking remarks on "Volpone," who was undoubtedly intended for Godolphin himself. The man was talking treason and libel, declared Godolphin, and should be arrested and impeached. Doubtless this was so, agreed the Queen, but after Lord Godolphin had left she was found to be in a rare good humour. This sermon was another straw blowing before the quickening Tory wind.

The Duke of Marlborough heard the tales which were told of him and came back for another audience. The story of the petition, he insisted, was lies. He looked

very weary. He had so many battles to fight, on so many fronts. But Anne was not thinking of him in this light. He was to her, now, only the strongest obstacle in a wall of obstacles. He had, however, another request which she was glad to grant. His Duchess was anxious to live more completely in the country, might she be excused from so close observance of her duties? Anne agreed with alacrity and did not attend when he asked that her daughters might fulfil her duties for her.

The Duchess came too, a few days later, to thank the Queen for advancing her daughters. But Anne was quite unaware that she had advanced these ladies. She objected instantly. "Did the Duke misunderstand you, Madam?" asked Mrs. Freeman. Anne did not venture to dispute. "I desire I may never more be troubled with the subject," she interrupted quickly.

The Sacheverell trial had been adjourned for the second day. Anne, just back from Westminster Hall, was drinking her chocolate at St. James's. She could still hear an echo of the shouting which had followed her all the way from the Hall to the Palace, "God and Dr. Sacheverell," "God bless the Queen!" She had not realised, that day when Godolphin had come to her, tapping the Doctor's sermon so angrily, that this impeachment was to be a trial of the Whig Party, the Government, the war, and the Marlborough family. But as she rode forth that morning, to listen incognito in her curtained box to the defence and accusation of the man she secretly applauded, she realised that the people of England were making this technical conflict representative of a far wider one. The dirty, roaring people who had pressed around her chair, put their faces to the window and shouted, "We hope your Majesty is for

God and Doctor Sacheverell," took the fight to be one between their old beloved Church, the Church of the charitable, the fatherly, the loyalists, against a group of freethinkers and revolutionists. When she reached the hall and listened to one speaker after another making long speeches which were not so much directed against Doctor Sacheverell, or in defence of him, as declarations of their own belief in matters of Church and State government, she realised dimly that these men were making this contest into a struggle for the nation's destiny. In this strange, indirect fashion the fight between Whig and Tory was to be decided.

The roar swelled and diminished, swelled again. At intervals came the irregular trampling of feet past the Palace, a crowd running towards Haymarket. The city was in an uproar ; the standard of the Church was raised again, and again the mob had responded savagely ; knocking down respectable God-fearing men because they did not uncap themselves as the Doctor passed from his trial to his house, stoning the windows of non-conformist clergymen, and now, drunk with excitement, crowds were marching to Lincoln's Inn and Clerkenwell with brands to burn down some meeting-houses there.

The Earl of Sunderland came in to the closet as Anne sat there meditating on the day and sipping her chocolate. He was anxious, his wig slightly awry, and his sword-knot disarranged. The mob was out of hand, he announced alarmingly. They had beset the Bank of England, were rushing hither and thither with torches, a man had been killed, even ; they had burnt down two meeting-houses—torn down (he panted and mopped his forehead with a lace handkerchief), torn down Bishop Burnet's chapel of St. John's and were thronged about his house, swearing to kill him if they caught him.

There was no saying where they would be next, and what they would do.

The mob ! Her old terror caught Anne, the terror of angry men with knives and axes, shouting at the gates. For a moment she was drowned in panic. She could not stop herself trembling. The ladies in her room, Sunderland, were waiting for her to speak ; they were looking at her. She realised they expected her to give an order. She raised her eyes from the floor, saw again the familiar furniture, the walls hung with the familiar tapestries, the brocaded chairs ; saw the well-known faces of her ladies, and beyond the half-closed door, the back of a sentry, stolid and unhearing. Her fear rolled off ; she was perfectly serene, a little contemptuous.

“Send my foot and horse guards forthwith, and disperse the rioters.”

“Madam,” put in Sunderland, disturbed yet, “is this wise, to leave your palace unguarded at such a moment ?”

“Do your duty, my lord,” said Anne steadily ; “God will be my guard.”

The next morning the Duchess bustled in, just as Anne was about to set out for Westminster again. She had not yet retired to the country. Though they scarcely spoke to each other, the Duchess still attended on the Queen and yesterday had waited on her at the Hall, where, Anne remembered, she had made a to-do about whether the ladies were to sit or stand in the box—or some such matter.

“I observed yesterday, Madam,” said Mrs. Freeman, her head on one side as usual, “that the Duchess of Somerset refused to sit, which I do not know the meaning of, for your Majesty was pleased to order it, and that’s

no more than is agreeable to the constant practice at Court ; but if it would be in any respect more pleasing to your Majesty that we should stand in future, I beg you will let me know your mind about it, for I should be very sorry to do anything that would give you the least dissatisfaction."

"If I had not liked you to sit," said Anne shortly, as she took her fan from her waiting woman, "why should I have ordered it?" And when the Duchess had withdrawn, a little doubtfully, Anne remarked peevishly to the Duchess of Beaufort near by :

"The Duchess has many complaints ; they are tedious. Indeed I do not know," Anne cried impatiently, "which is less agreeable, her complaints or her disrespect."

Her ladies drew a little closer. "She is growing intolerable," Anne heard the Duchess remark not too low to Lady Jane Hyde, who was waiting on her that day. "An odd thing, Madam, we were standing as sponsors to a child the other day, her Grace of Marlborough and myself ; the name proposed being Anne. I was surprised when her Grace remarked, 'I will not stand for the babe if she is called Anne. There never was anyone good for much of that name.'"

"Intolerable !" "Outrageous !" murmured the ladies.

Anne went pink and said to her dresser, "A wrinkle there, Dansey, I think;" and "Come, ladies, it is time we took to our chairs."

At the end of three weeks Sacheverell was announced guilty and given so light a sentence that the verdict amounted to an acquittal. The country was overjoyed. The crowd, as enthusiastic as ever, if less riotous after their taste of the guards' bayonets, cheered the Doctor

home, pelted him with flowers, shouted for the Queen and yelled for the Church. The tide was turning at last. It was time to make a change, one or two changes, to try if the temper of the country was set in a new direction. Within a month of the trial Anne appointed the almost Tory Duke of Shrewsbury Lord Chamberlain in place of the Whig Marquis of Kent. It was the first time she had taken her way alone, had faced opposition from authority. She was frightened still, felt inclined to stamp her foot in nursery fashion. "They *cannot* disobey," she kept repeating as she wrote to tell Godolphin of her wishes.

"ST. JAMES'S,
"April 13th, 1710.

"I am sorry to find by your letter, you are so very much in the spleen, as to think you cannot for the future contribute anything towards my quiet, but your wishes ; however, I still hope you will use your endeavours. Never was there more occasion than now ; for by all one hears and sees every day, as things are at present, I think one can expect nothing but confusion. I am sure, for my part, I shall be ready to join with all my friends, in everything that is reasonable, to allay the heat and ferment that is in this poor nation.

"Since you went to Newmarket, I have received several assurances from the Duke of Shrewsbury, of his readiness to serve me upon all occasions, and his willingness to come into my service ; which offer I was very glad to accept of, having a good opinion of him, and believing he may be of great use in these troublesome times. For these reasons, I have resolved to part with the Duke of Kent, who I hope will be easy in the matter by being made a duke ; and I hope

that this change will meet with your approbation, which I wish I may ever have in all my actions.

“ I have not yet declared my intention of giving the staff and key to the Duke of Shrewsbury, because I would be the first that should acquaint you with it.”

Godolphin replied at once :

“ NEWMARKET,
“ *April 15th, 1710.*

“ I have the honour of your Majesty’s letter of the 13th, by which I have the grief to find that what you are pleased to call spleen in my former letter, was only a true impulse and conviction of mind, that your Majesty is suffering yourself to be guided to your own ruin and destruction as fast as it is possible for them to compass it, to whom you seem so much to hearken.

“ I am not therefore so much surprised, as concerned, at the resolution which your Majesty says you have taken, of bringing in the Duke of Shrewsbury. For when people began to be sensible it would be difficult to persuade your Majesty to dissolve a Parliament, which, for two winters together, had given you above six millions a year for the support of a war, upon which your crown depends ; even while that war is still subsisting, they have had the cunning to contrive this proposal to your Majesty, which in its consequence will certainly put you under a necessity of breaking the Parliament though contrary (I yet believe) to your mind and intention.

“ I beg your Majesty to be persuaded, I do not say this out of the least prejudice to the Duke of Shrewsbury. There is no man of whose capacity I have had a better impression, nor with whom I have lived more easily and freely for above twenty years. Your Majesty

may please to remember, that at your first coming to the crown I was desirous he should have had one of the chief posts in your service ; and it would have been happy for your Majesty and the kingdom, if he had accepted that offer ; but he thought fit to decline it, and the reasons generally given at that time for his doing so, do not much recommend him to your Majesty's service. But I must endeavour to let your Majesty see things as they really are. And to bring him into your service and into your business at this time, just after his being in a public open conjunction in every Tory vote with the whole body of Tories, and in private, constant correspondence and caballing with Mr. Harley in everything, what consequence can this possibly have, but to make every man that is now in your Cabinet to run from it as they would from the plague. And I leave it to your Majesty to judge what effect this entire change of your ministers will have among your allies abroad, and how well this war is like to be carried on, in their opinion, by those who have all along opposed and obstructed it, and who will like any peace the better, the more it leaves France at liberty, to take their time of imposing the Pretender upon this country.

“ These considerations must certainly make Holland run immediately into a separate peace with France, and make your Majesty lose all the honour, and all the reputation your arms had acquired by the war ; and make the kingdom lose all the fruits of that vast expense which they have been at in this way, as well as all the advantage and safety which they had so much need of, and had so fair a prospect of obtaining by it. And can anybody imagine that after so great a disappointment to the kingdom, there will not be an inquiry into the causes of it ; and who have been the

occasion of so great a change in your Majesty's measures and counsels, which had been so long successful, and gotten you so great a name in the world? I am very much afraid your Majesty will find, when it is too late, that it will be a pretty difficult task for anybody to stand against such an inquiry. I am sure if I did not think all these consequences inevitable, I would never give your Majesty the trouble and uneasiness of laying them before you. But persuaded as I am that your Majesty will find them, it is my indispensable duty to do it out of pure faithfulness and zeal for your Majesty's service and honour. Your Majesty having taken a resolution of so much consequence to all your affairs both at home and abroad, without acquainting the Duke of Marlborough or me with it, till after you had taken it, is the least part of my mortification in this whole affair. Though perhaps the world may think the long and faithful services we have constantly and zealously endeavoured to do your Majesty, might have deserved a little more consideration. However, for my own part, I most humbly beg leave to assure your Majesty, I will never give the least obstruction to your measures or to any ministers you shall please to employ. And I must beg further, to make two humble requests to your Majesty, the one that you will allow me to pass the remainder of my life always out of London, where I may find most ease and quiet. The other, that you would keep this letter and read it again next Christmas, and then be pleased to make your own judgment, who hath given you the best and most faithful advice."

Here were the same reproaches, the same old arguments with which Godolphin and Somers and the rest

had often assailed her ; they meant less than nothing to her. "Balance of power " was a phrase she had never understood ; all this talk of trade and influence, of markets and speculations, had never interested her or been comprehensible to her. She understood only that her friends were in power or her enemies ; the distinctions she made were between those who supported the Church and the Crown and the others who did not seem to revere anything which to her was important. For the country, peace and right spiritual guidance were surely the most necessary benefits. These long arguments of the freethinking Whigs, all this balance-of-power and trading-interests speechmaking roused her suspicion or contempt. She brushed aside Godolphin's letter, even his request for resignation—she was not ready for that yet—and called her friends together for further advice. A few weeks later Sunderland, son of her old enemy and son-in-law to the Marlboroughs, was dismissed. Still the country gave no sign of dissent. Anne knew now, assuredly at last, that government lay in her hands, in the hands of her friends.

IV

MEANWHILE in the Palace another storm had broken. While this strange courage lasted, Anne was desperately thrusting ahead, committing herself to a position in her personal relationships which she would never be able to forsake. Mrs. Masham was not her only intimate now, she had taken new friends from among her ladies. For now the Duchess did not reign over the bedchamber as in the old days, Anne found that ladies of degree—the Duchess of Somerset, for instance, the wife of the “Proud Duke,” or the gentle Countess of Winchelsea (who wrote poetry and spoke wistfully, though timidly, of the family over the water)—were more responsive to her and found an inclination to friendship in them which had not been evident before. They had the manners which Anne understood; gentle, reserved, and dignified. For though she had first loved Sarah Jennings for her uncompromising frankness and honest demeanour, Anne found now she was homesick for courtesy. Sarah’s passions, her insolence to servants when she was excited, had always made Anne shrink a little. Courtesy with her inferiors was a quality Anne was not conscious of herself, it was so much a part of her inheritance. They had a saying in the Palace which she overheard in these days, “Queen Anne might make Sarah Churchill a duchess, but it was beyond her power to make her a gentlewoman.”

And now among these new friends she found herself rashly, beseechingly making known her grievances against her old friend. She was well satisfied by the response she received. Her ladies had been waiting for such a cue. A word from one, a phrase from

another, an anecdote from a third ; tales of tyranny in the Palace, intrigue in the Cabinet, tales of her ingratitude, her insulting remarks on her benefactor—the accusations flowed like a torrent. But when they accused the Duchess of dishonesty, Anne stopped them. “Everybody knows cheating is not the Duchess of Marlborough’s crime,” she said.

For herself she needed no evidence of crime, she only wanted to be rid of one who cowed her spirit and darkened her days with the threat of storms. But she wanted a justification for her faithlessness to an old friend to show to the world—and behold, as soon as she asked, a thousand justifications were given. She could not, privately, rid herself of her feeling of guilt, of that same uneasiness which she had suffered when she first grew intimate with Abigail Hill. She had secretly undermined, betrayed, a friendship which had sheltered and comforted her in youth, in her days of trial. She had deserted this friendship for another. Mrs. Freeman knew this. Anne read the accusation in every letter from the Duchess, heard it in every word she spoke. It was this half-realised guilt which made her unable to face the Duchess with accusation, which made her at once so anxious to rid herself of that angry presence, and so reluctant to take any steps to do so.

Then in the early spring, after Sacheverell’s trial, when the nation watched to see the last battle open between Whig and Tory and Sovereign ; while the Duke in Flanders waited racked with anxiety for the dispatches which should tell him that his allies were fallen and his beloved plans for England’s glory were frustrated on the eve of his achievement, while Anne herself waited holding herself in readiness to strike the first blow, the Duchess of Marlborough informed

her imperatively that she must have an interview. Anne knew from the Duchess's face what had happened. Her conversations with her ladies had been reported back to Sarah at last, as she had half hoped they would be. Now faced with the interview she had known she must endure eventually, she quailed again ; asked the Duchess to put in writing what she had to say. "What I have to say is of a nature which renders writing it impossible," said the Duchess, and Anne knew this was true. She fixed an appointment for six the next day ; then cowered again when the time came ; sent a message that Sarah should write her communication. Again Sarah caught her in a corridor, put her request for a personal talk. Once more Anne gave her an hour. But now the crisis had come her spirit failed her. The old terror returned ; the terror of being found out—even though there was no crime to discover—the terror of being accused, brought up face to face with a situation. She had not tasted this fear so strongly since the days before her father's exile. Again she wrote to Sarah, she was fatigued with business, she was going to Kensington to dine and rest herself, "but I will not detain you from the country and it would be the same thing if you put in writing what you have to say as if you talked with me."

To this, Anne at Kensington, sitting in George's room after her dinner, received a billet in reply :

"I am glad your Majesty is going to Kensington to make use of the fresh air and to take care of your health. I will follow you thither and wait every day till it is convenient for you to see me, as what I have to say is of such a nature as to require no answer."

A page scratched at the door as she read the letter and said her Grace the Duchess of Marlborough was without, might she see the Queen? Whatever Anne had learnt of courage ebbed away now. There was no escape from this interview, and she was in utter panic. She had not even the strength, after the crowded days of small defeats and victories, thwarted hopes and fears allayed, to reason out her position to reassure herself with her well-prepared justifications. She could not bear to hear that voice, hear the Duchess's advancing step. She could not rouse herself to counter the Duchess's fiery logic. She *must* come in—then somehow, she must be prevented from speaking.

Anne sat down at her desk and took up a pen, then nodded to the page over her shoulder. Her heart was beating fast. She heard the door shut, the murmur of voices, footsteps, the door open, shut again, and knew then that the Duchess was in the room. Anne turned on her stool. Quickly she said :

“I was going to write to you.”

“Your Majesty,” began Sarah—she was magnificent in bright blue bodice and quilted petticoat of the new style, well hooped. The diamonds on the stays gleamed between the lacings of her bodice, pearls showed in the roll of her hair, of which one lock hung over her shoulder trailing on to the white lace tucker,—“Your Majesty——”

“Whatever you have to say,” said Anne, “you may put it in writing.”

“You never did so hard a thing to anyone as to refuse them speech,” said the Duchess, and her voice was low.

“You can put all you have to say in writing,” repeated Anne.

"I cannot rest till I have cleared myself from some particular calumnies with which I have been loaded. . . ."

"In writing," Anne's tongue repeated it.

The Duchess was not storming at her Queen to-day, but her voice was terrifying still, it was so low, so insistent, so reasoning. She was pleading a case. There were those about the Queen, she said, who had made her believe things she had said which she was no more capable of saying than of killing her own children. She stepped nearer to the writing-table, around the side to face the Queen. But Anne turned her head away and spoke towards the window. "Without doubt there are many lies told."

Let her know, the Duchess said, of the particulars of which she had been accused; if she was guilty that would quickly appear; if innocent, this method would clear her.

Anne put her hand on Sarah's letter, lying before her on the writing-table. "I shall give you no answer," she said monotonously.

Still came the voice by her ear, pleading for justice. Still Anne, muffling her comprehension lest she surrender, replied, "I shall give you no answer . . . I shall give you no answer."

"I have no design in giving you this trouble," said her old friend, and her voice trembled a little, "to solicit the return of your favour, my sole view is to clear myself; this is too just a design to be wholly disputed by your Majesty."

Anne rose, putting back the chair, and turned towards the door. But as she advanced, so did Sarah, step by step, a little behind her, with the same plea—to be told her accusations and to clear herself. And Anne over her shoulder repeated, "You desired no answer

and you shall have none." She put her hand on the door handle and paused. There was a sound like a sob. She waited. The Duchess of Marlborough was weeping. She did not speak as the tears rolled down her bright cheeks. She bit her lip, that full, short, pouting lip Anne had watched so many years, curving to smile, contracting to pout. The Duchess's shoulders shook. She pulled her handkerchief through her fingers. Anne was stiffened by embarrassment, dared not leave, and waited, shrouding herself in insensibility. If only the interview would end soon, soon!

The Duchess recovered herself, stood upright and spoke to the Queen, her eyes full on her face.

"Might I not still have been happy in your favour if I could have contradicted or dissembled my real opinion of men and things? Have I ever told you one lie, during our long friendship, or played the hypocrite once? Have I offended in anything, unless in a very zealous pressing upon you that which I thought necessary for your service and security?"

She had been informed, she said then, that stories were perpetually told her Majesty to incense her. And steadily she continued with explanations, an old story Anne remembered hearing from the Duchess of Somerset was refuted, another from Mrs. Masham, another from Mr. Harley. The Duchess could not cover them all. And how inconsiderable and unimportant were these stories! How little the Duchess understood their insignificance! How little she understood that what were important were the terrors and humiliations of the past few years, the love rejected, the comradeship despised; all those blows which had broken down little by little the friendship which

once seemed inviolable. But Anne could never explain this. There could be no true communication between them now.

"I beg to know what other particulars you have heard of me, that I may not be denied all power of justifying myself."

"Have I on anything that has touched that disagreeable woman?" answered Anne's mind (how little the Duchess understood!) But she only replied:

"You desired no answer, and you shall have none."

"Would you tell me some other time?"

"You desired no answer."

"Do you not yourself know that I have often despised interest in comparison of serving you faithfully and doing right? Do you not know me to be of a temper incapable of disowning anything which I know to be true?"

"You desired no answer," shuddered Anne, throwing up her head, "and you shall have none."

She saw the Duchess's eyes gleam as they gleamed when a storm was rising. But the Duchess controlled herself. She stood silent a second, beating one clenched hand on the palm of the other. Then she said, her voice trembling a little, but evenly:

"I am confident your Majesty will suffer for such an instance of inhumanity."

"That will be to myself," replied Anne, and she stood still and watched the Duchess walking slowly to the door, opening it and shutting it behind her.

They never met again.

A few weeks later Anne dismissed Lord Sunderland; and in August, Godolphin, Lord High Treasurer since the Queen's accession, a trusted friend of sovereigns

since King Charles's reign, was asked to deliver up his staff of office. The Treasuryship was temporarily put in commission with Harley and six other Tories. The office of Mistress of the Robes was taken from Sarah and given to the red-haired Duchess of Somerset. The Whigs were down. The government was in the hands of the Queen's friends.

ANNE was forty-four years old. She was corpulent ; her body so cumbersome that she could hardly walk at all, misshapen in its obesity. Her face was heavy and coarse. Her mouth was pushed to a pout. Her eyes except when she smiled were unresponsive. Her hands, once beautiful, were white still, but now they were puffy and restless. Still her voice was clear and low ; it had scarcely changed in twenty years. As Mrs. Betterton had taught her when she was a little girl, so she spoke each word still ; they came from her mouth beautifully balanced and articulated. Anne was an old woman at forty-four. When the change of government was brought about, when the Marlboroughs fell and her friends came out into the open, victorious, it seemed at first only that she was entering that glory which from her girlhood had been postponed year by year, through some accident. She had been on the eve of her apotheosis ever since her marriage ; a dozen times achievement had been within reach, as many times it had been snatched away from her. But now, after a rather longer interval than she had anticipated, she had come into her maturity. It had seemed to her once that this maturity, this acknowledgment of her power, would be brought about by some spiritual awakening within her. There would be some revelation made ; strength would descend on her and she would speak with the voice of a prophet. Now she had come to understand by years of experience that this coming into her own was achieved simply by material means. In short, she could have her own way as soon as those who obstructed her were removed ; when she was in a position to

demand and get her own way, then she had achieved maturity. So one had but to set the scene—change ministers, for instance, rid oneself of impediments, produce a situation about one which would be harmonious—and one could assume majesty.

It was not thus, weary and old, that she had seen herself come in to her own, when she had dreamt dreams as a girl, had watched the meteor rise in the sky. But now she refused to take count of the years which had intervened between her youth and her achievement; the time *had* come; others recognised this. Old nobles, stout Tories, friends of her father, came to Court again and greeted her with new respect. “I am glad I can call you Queen in reality now, Madam,” said one of them.

So now let everything be set on foot, those desires be accomplished which she had so long been forced to subdue. Let the churches be freed from the oppression of the freethinker, and let peace come to the land of weary fighters. Let those who object be silenced and those who work together for good be set in high places. Government would be simple again, as she had dreamt it would be, no longer obstructed by discussion and contradiction; not darkened by intrigue, but illuminated by regal majesty.

Anne turned to the business of making a new state of affairs, of clearing up the ruins made by the Whigs. This took her longer than she had hoped it would. There was always one more fence to leap. But each, perhaps, would be the last. . . .

She had trouble with the Duchess after the interview of April 7th. Sarah had clung to her keys of office and nothing would remove her; she sent messages through the Queen’s doctor that the Queen’s letters

to her could be used for a purpose if she did not get her way. While ministers were being dismissed and appointed and the face of the Government was changing, Sarah kept the whole Court at bay with the threat of publishing the Queen's letters. There was no dismissing her. At last her husband came home. He alone could manage her. There was an interview between the Duke and the Queen. Anne was firm, was cold ; "It is for my honour that the keys be returned forthwith." The keys did come back, having been thrown in the Duke's face by his termagant wife. The messages about the letters diminished.

Then there was a distinct bitterness between the Duchess of Somerset and Mrs. Masham. The Duchess was undoubtedly Whiggish, though Anne liked her for all that. Mrs. Masham told Mrs. Harley that the Duchess was a dangerous influence for the Queen and Mr. Harley spoke to Anne ; but Anne did not heed him.

Then there were the hundred pleadings, warnings, and threats of all the old Whigs to be endured. Bishop Burnet warned Anne that she would be burnt at Smithfield if she encouraged peace and the Catholic menace ; but Anne got rid of him by tapping her fan impatiently on the arm of her chair. Others were not so easily dismissed. There was a whispering and chattering continually, the Somerset faction against the Masham faction ; Court functionaries came to plead their cases now their patrons were in disgrace ; others came to warn the Queen against the pleaders ; secret envoys came from France (for Anne had set about negotiating secretly for peace as soon as she felt safe enough to do so, and with every encouragement from Mr. Harley and his friend St. John) ; secret messages

from the Pretender. She had burning talks with Masham on Jacobitism, burning talks with the Duchess on anti-Jacobitism.

Besides these lesser anxieties she was distinctly worried by some of the people whom her friends had brought into power. There was St. John, for instance, of whom Harley thought so highly. Anne disapproved of St. John. His private life was most reprehensible; he drank outrageously and his amours were common gossip. He was conceited. Anne longed to snub him, but he was so clever that it was difficult to catch him out, though his lounging gait, his careless, rather rash manner of talking was always verging on the disrespectful. Finally one day he appeared at the Council table in a tie wig. "*Really*," said Anne, "I suppose Mr. St. John will present himself to me in a nightcap next time he comes." Mrs. Masham thought him a scoundrel. But he knew French and he understood foreign politics. Anne did not see how to get rid of him—he was so useful.

Then Harley, whom she created Lord Oxford, himself was difficult sometimes. Anne felt, after the Tory Government was well established and he had been put at the head of the Government as Lord Treasurer, that he often kept information from her. "Be easy, Madam," he would say when she pressed him, "things in general go very well." He seemed alarmed at her interest in affairs of State and distinctly disconcerted by her new self-confidence. Anne was not inclined in these days to delegate her power or to brook any opposition to her will. No one should be another Marlborough. She tried to thwart everyone, even her friends, when she grew suspicious that they were inducing her to submit to conditions she had no mind for.

She refused her approval to appointments over which she had not been sufficiently consulted, blocked certain clauses in State proposals, simply to show her power, insisted on this person in this place and that measure in that, and often, as a result, found herself in difficulties. Then she would look sternly at the Lord Treasurer, who would jerk his head in that peculiar manner he had when embarrassed and say, "This was by your orders, Madam."

There were so many men, Anne thought wearily, and so few to trust. St. John and Oxford and Shrewsbury (though he was courteous and had something of the aristocrat about him, and was handsome—though some said stupid too) and Harcourt—too clever—and many more too; all thronging around that Council table with their lifted eyebrows, their signals to each other, their "but your Majestys." She tried to make up her mind on what questions she could understand, alone in her closet with those wise friends Mrs. Masham and the Duchess of Somerset.

For all the irritations she suffered, however, those were her friends who steered the country now and the work she had at heart went on. Peace negotiations were publicly set on foot. The Duke of Marlborough had been left stranded at the head of an army which was practically forbidden to fight. He was the last obstacle to be turned aside—that was all he represented to Anne. There was no echo of the glory of Blenheim in her ears, no flash of remembrance of past days spent pacing the terraces of Windsor discussing the liberties of England, when she wrote to him dismissing him from all his appointments. He was dismissed on charges of peculation, all elaborately proved. Anne did not care what were the charges. Marlborough had gone;

she would never be reproached again by that calm, grave face, the gentle, reasoning voice.

Meanwhile her own private life proceeded as it had proceeded since her accession, yet more calmly since the voice of the Duchess of Marlborough was no longer heard in the anteroom or at the card table. She still went to the races as when she was a child, ran her own horses and allowed a certain satisfaction to show in her countenance when they won. Still at certain seasons she laid her hands on the sick poor and blessed them for the King's Evil, and lovingly still they crowded to her in utter faith, bringing their children and aged. Still she played at basset with her ladies, still at night she sat in her music room when the candles threw shadows on the dark panelled walls and listened to her musicians render airs from the latest Italian opera.

Still she journeyed on the usual circuit, from Kensington to Hampton, thence to Windsor for the summer, back again as autumn progressed to Hampton Court, and then to St. James's as the winter activities opened. At Windsor she hunted the stag, in spite of her disabilities, in her single chaise, driving herself furiously after the hounds through the woods and fields, returning home in time for her dinner at three o'clock, which she ate with a few gentlemen and whatever guests were present.

Or if the day were not set apart for hunting she would hold a reception in her drawing-room. She did not love to receive ; she could not talk so gaily as when she was young, she found. Everyone was so clever ; that Dr. Swift, who came to Windsor so much and was a friend of Lord Oxford's, they said he wrote brilliantly in the newspapers. She felt he must be looking at her searchingly and waiting for her to betray herself

by foolish speech. She could not speak cleverly now, she was too tired and too old. They were all so clever ; St. John and Mr. Swift, and their friends, Mr. Addison and Mr. Steele, and her own physician Dr. Arbuthnot, who was a friend of theirs. They had jokes and allusions which she did not understand. Thinking of them talking so gaily together, so loudly over their pipes in those smoky coffee houses (Lord Oxford was always saying " But, Madam, they are saying in the coffee houses. . . ." and he seemed to think it was important to know what they *were* saying), she grew lonely and frightened at these receptions for all her achievement of maturity. There would come long spreading silences. Anne would pick at her fan, pluck at a tassel, put her fan to her mouth, glance down at her feet, and then, with a sad, uncertain smile, turn to a gentleman near by and ask him in the lovely tones of which she alone was mistress, " It is cold for the time of year, do you not think, my lord ? "

VI

IN just a little while she would be secure, she would have peace. There were only a few difficulties to be smoothed out, a few enemies quieted. She had nearly arrived now. . . .

In the autumn of 1712 Anne fell very ill. She had not been strong since her accession. Overindulgence in eating and drinking, anxiety and fear had weakened her. Her limbs were often paralysed with gout or dropsy and for months at a time she would be unable to walk. Now every attack of illness seriously enfeebled her. After her recovery she felt low ; she found it harder to lift her spirit over the jars and cares of her daily life. She fought against it, but the old feeling of oppression came soaking through. Again she felt herself alone, encircled by those who waited to spring on her and wrest her birthright from her. Across the Channel lay the huntsmen, Sophia in Hanover and the half-brother in Lorraine. She could not forget these two.

As soon as she fell ill she heard the whispering in the ante-room of St. James's, of Westminster, of every court in Europe ; the words passed from member to member in the convocation of the House of Commons, the chattering in coffee houses—"The Queen is ill again—where is the King? Send for the Elector of Hanover—for James Stuart!" The two might be in England now, incognito, waiting, in some house in St. James's or Richmond, till a message arrived from Kensington, "The Queen is dead—long live the King!"

Anne lay awake, tense with these thoughts, the pain grinding her limbs. They should not kill her before

her time. They should not bring over that old suitor of hers to wait for her crown till her last breath was drawn. Her hatred for George and his mother increased her physical pain ; she remembered carefully that visit of years ago ; the slight, the withdrawal, the shame. She saw them, he and his mother, the old woman of eighty, waiting there in Hanover ; they counted every breath she drew.

There was the other rival too. She knew, though she said nothing, how St. John, even Lord Oxford and a dozen others were dispatching their daily bulletin of news and advice to that unseen brother of hers. *They* might not even wait till she died. Who could tell what secret forces lay armed here and there along the coasts of England, till one day a ship brought over this boy (so like Gloucester) to lead them into London as James III ? A Catholic Stuart again ? All the terrors the Duchess of Somerset had dangled before her eyes, all the horrors old Burnet had threatened, came back to Anne as she forced herself to contemplate the accession of her brother. The Church was her child on whom she poured all her love and care, the Church of England *was* England, the spirit for which the body might well be sacrificed. But if James came she would die seeing the barbarous rites performed again in St. James's Chapel, the stake, the block, the exiles driven forth, the idols raised up again for worship. . . . How could she speak of these things to St. John the freethinker, Oxford the drunkard ? Yet those crowds, patient and wistful, who called for alms and kissed her hands when she touched for King's Evil, *they* would understand her. A great bitterness came over her ; she remembered the schemes of her early days, when she and Sarah Churchill had sat talking

together of the blessings which they would bestow on the country in a little while, when her father was dead and men and women of goodwill ruled the people. There was an understanding between her and the people, the poor people. Soon she would break through the barriers before her, set up by intriguing politicians, and stand before the multitudes herself. In a little while her difficulties would be smoothed out and she would arrive at the place of her hopes.

On other nights she would suffer pain when she considered her brother, wandering from country to country without home or family (for the peace terms between England and France had stipulated that Louis should no longer harbour the Pretender), and it seemed to her that there was some absurd artificial barrier between them, set up in the face of their opposition ; for he was a Stuart, one of the divine Stuarts, and so was she. Here was she, alone, deserted in her own country, and there was he alone in exile. They should be together, these two ; the heirs of the anointed. He alone could understand her ; she him.

Then she would call from her bed to Lady Masham, who lay beside her on a pallet and ask news of her brother. For Lady Masham was an open Jacobite and spoke continually of his Highness abroad, told the Queen with great discretion what plans were being made for him (plans, it was understood, which were not to be put into active operation till the Queen was dead unless there was a reconciliation); she told of the state of his health, of his place of residence from month to month. Lady Masham would run to the Queen's bedside, soothe her, and plead with her to write a letter.

"There is a messenger sailing to-morrow, your Majesty, if you would care to send a letter."

Sometimes Anne would start to write, but the movement of the pen on the paper calmed her, and she would turn wearily to Lady Masham and say :

"He is a Papist."

Buckingham (Mulgrave had risen still higher) had once brought a long letter from her brother :

"MADAM,

"The violence and ambition of the enemies of our family and of the monarchy, have too long kept at distance those who by all the obligations of nature and duty ought to be firmly united, and have hindered us of the proper means of a better understanding between us which could not fail to produce the most happy effects to ourselves, to our family, and to our bleeding country.

"But whatever the success may be, I have resolved now to break through all reserve, and to be the first in an endeavour so just and necessary. The natural affection I bear you, and that King James our father had for you till his last breath, the consideration of our mutual interests, honour and safety, and the duty I owe to God and my country, are the true motives that persuade me to write to you, and to do all that is possible to come to a perfect union with you.

And you may be assured, Madam, that though I can never abandon, but with my life, my own just right, which you know is unalterably settled by the fundamental laws of the land, yet I am more desirous to owe to you than to any living, the recovery of it. For yourself, a work so just and glorious is reserved. The voice of God and nature calls you to it. The promises

you made to the King your father enjoin it. The preservation of our family and the preventing of unnatural wars, require it ; and the public good and welfare of our country recommend it to you, to rescue it from present and future evils which must, to the latest posterity, involve the nation in blood and confusion, till the succession be again settled in the right line.

He concluded, after urging her to send an agent to meet him :

“ And now, Madam, as you tender your own honour and happiness and the preservation and re-establishment of our ancient Royal family, the safety and welfare of a brave people, who are almost sinking under present weights, and have reason to fear greater, who have no reason to complain of me, and whom I must still and do love as my own, I conjure you to meet me in this friendly way of composing our differences, by which only we can hope for those good effects which will make us both happy, yourself more glorious than all the other parts of your life, and your memory to all posterity.”

“ How can I serve him, my lord ? ” asked Anne. “ You know well that a Papist cannot enjoy this crown in peace. Why has the example of the father weight with the son ? He prefers his religious errors to the throne of a great kingdom. He must thank himself, therefore, for his exclusion, he knows that I love my own family better than any other. All would be easy if he would enter the pale of the Church of England. Advise him to change his religion, my lord, as that only can change the opinions of mankind in his favour.”

So Buckingham wrote to the Prince. But James stoutly answered that he could not dissemble.

"I may reasonably expect that liberty of conscience which I deny to none." His father had said the same thing when he took the crown.

Anne was frightened of herself after these moments when she weakened towards her brother. One day she drew up a paper which she presented herself to her Council. It offered a reward for the apprehension of the Pretender, dead or alive, if found in Great Britain or Ireland. She would not raise her eyes to look at Oxford or St. John before her at the Council table, but she knew the dismay they showed. She caught the whisper, "Somerset's work." They might think what they chose. It was fear, older and deeper than any friendship she held now, which forced her to write that proclamation. The next day the Council met again. The question of the Pretender's apprehension was raised. "Dead or alive," said someone. Anne put her hand to her throat. The Council broke up then, for the Queen was bowed with weeping.

About the same time there was another move to invite over the Electress's grandson, who had been created Duke of Cambridge, to take his place in the House of Lords. Anne flamed with anger when the suggestion was put to her, struck her fist and her table and demanded pen and paper.

"May 19th, 1714.

"MADAM, SISTER, AUNT (she wrote),

"Since the right of succession to my kingdom has been declared to belong to you and your family, there have always been disaffected persons, who by particular views of their own interest, have entered into

measures to fix a Prince of your blood in my dominions, even while I am yet living. I never thought till now, that this project would have gone so far, as to have made the least impression on your mind. But (as far as I have lately perceived by public rumours which are industriously spread, that your Electoral Highness is come into this sentiment) it is important, with respect to the succession of your family, that I should tell you such a proceeding will infallibly draw along with it some consequences that will be dangerous to the succession itself, which is not secure any other ways than as the Princess, who actually wears the crown, maintains her authority and prerogative. There are here—such is our misfortune—a great many people that are seditiously disposed ; and I leave you to judge what tumults they may be able to raise, if they should have pretext to begin a commotion. I persuade myself, therefore, you will never consent that the least thing should be done that may disturb the repose of me or my subjects.

“Open yourself with the same freedom that I do to you, and propose whatever you think may contribute to the security of the succession. I will come into it with zeal, provided that it do not derogate from my dignity, which I am resolved to maintain.

“I am with a great deal of affection, etc”.

Anne could not do enough to satisfy her hatred when she thought of that mother and son in Hanover. She was growing curiously vindictive towards her enemies. The sacred hate of monarchs must be more bitter now that it was forced to be secret. Anne tried to satisfy herself by humiliating to herself those German cousins of hers. She took to sitting long after her

dinner with her ladies about her, ladies of strong hatreds, all of them, and commanding Tom D'Urfey to sing her his latest ballad. D'Urfey had produced topical ballads for a succession of Governments ; Anne laughed and rocked herself backwards and forwards over his lyric of the Electress ;

The Crown's far too weighty
For shoulders of eighty,
She could not sustain such a trophy.
Her hand too already
Has grown so unsteady,
She can't hold a sceptre ;
So Providence kept her
Away—poor old Dowager Sophy !

The Queen presented D'Urfey with fifty pounds for this song.

If there were rivals abroad waiting to snatch away the crown she had scarcely won, there were those at home who stood between her and the security towards which she was working so desperately ; and by 1714 Oxford was the chief of these. Already that indifference which he showed towards her when he had first taken office had turned to insolence ; the cunning which had helped her to throw off the Marlborough cabal had, it seemed, been used only for his own aggrandisement. As a statesman he faltered and dodged. He had no strength ; he was neither good Hanoverian nor good Stuart, and certainly he was not a good subject of his Queen. She could never rule with confidence while he was at the head of the Government ; he had no resource, or else, Anne suspected sometimes, he had not even enough respect to advise and inform her sincerely.

“In general things go very well, Madam.” That

was all she could get from him. Very well ! With a Jacobite league arming itself at the Palace door, with Parliament rent by dissension ; Hanoverian Tories and Whigs, Jacobite Tories and Whigs, each obstructing the government of the country by voting on matters quite irrelevant to the succession according to the succession prejudices of the supporters of the measure in question. With the dissenters threatening resistance because of the new Schism Bill, with Mohocks and Hell-fire scoundrels invading the streets at night, running their swords through peaceable citizens, so that it was dangerous for anyone to walk in civilised England after sundown !

Lady Masham hated Oxford now, too ; she hated everyone by this time who was not clearly Jacobite. Now St. John (lately created Viscount Bolingbroke) was her favourite. They had all been friends once. Anne was so tired of quarrels ; allay one and two grew in its place ; remove a fractious lord, two quarrelled over his body. She *must* have peace.

She prorogued Parliament on July 7th, 1714, and to the end of her allotted words added a few of her own ; for the time had come when she must step forward and proclaim her own desires to her own people.

" My chief concern is to preserve to you and to your posterity your holy religion, the liberty of my subjects, and to secure the present and future tranquillity of my kingdoms ; but these desirable ends can never be obtained unless all groundless jealousies are laid aside, and unless you pay the same regard for my just prerogative, which I have always showed for the rights of my people."

There was a murmuring of displeasure as she withdrew, but Anne did not hear it. She had stepped for-

ward. She must hasten now to accomplishment, for she was growing very weary. Bolingbroke and Oxford quarrelled daily in the Council room, they had to disagree over every measure. Anne watched them daily; Oxford thumping the table, pushing back his chair; Bolingbroke smiling at him, appealing to the other ministers with shrugging shoulders and saying "Gentlemen, my lord seems to misunderstand. . . ." He too forgot Anne's presence, till when the conflict became so fierce that even handsome Bolingbroke reddened with choler and leant across the table at the Treasurer, Anne rose and called each by name. Bolingbroke would bow and beg forgiveness, but Oxford sulked.

Anne went to Windsor the night Parliament was prorogued, and, exhausted as she was by the voices of ministers and the clatter and shouting in the streets (the London traffic was becoming unbearable), almost wept with gratitude for the quiet fresh air. She could scarcely stand now, and to save her mounting the stairs a pulley had been constructed to draw up her chair from the drawing-room to her bedroom. Mrs. Masham attended her to bed and they discussed the Lord Treasurer. He drank excessively. When he attended Anne he often could scarcely keep his balance when he bowed. "And he is always late, Masham," said Anne, sighing. "Must I wait on the pleasure of his lordship? I have dismissed him for discourtesy when he attended me, I have not invited him to my receptions—can nothing make him leave office?"

"He guards his little white staff like a dragon, Madam."

"He must go, he *shall* go. Shall I be tormented by my own servants? This perpetual contention—it will cause my death," cried the Queen. The blood

rushed to her head. She had so much to do. She so hated quarrels. But Lady Masham had a score of things to tell, of Oxford's insolence at dinner the other day, of his disrespect for the Queen's name during conversation with foreigners, of his servile messages to Hanover. "You have one less enemy there, Madam," said Abigail. For the Electress had lately died, some said as the effect of rage over Anne's letter.

When Lady Masham did allow Anne to sleep, she was fevered with age and anxiety. The next day she was ill, but as messages kept arriving of the angry scenes at Cabinet meetings, she struggled back to town as soon as she could. Oxford must go now. His dismissal would be another step forward. A little time to wait, a little farther to go, and then she would truly come into her own. She must take the next step forward.

On July 27th she summoned the privy councillors privately and told them she had called them to declare her intention of dismissing the Lord Treasurer.

"He neglects all business. He is seldom to be understood. When he does explain himself, I cannot depend upon the truth of what he says. He never comes to me at the time appointed ; he comes drunk. To crown all, gentlemen, he behaves to me with bad manners, indecency, and disrespect."

She dismissed the Council ; called a secretary and dictated a letter to Oxford calling for his resignation. Within a few hours he attended her, not drunk this time, but with dignity in his bearing. There was no disturbance. The staff was rendered up and in half an hour the interview was over.

She had rolled another rock from her path, but her strength was almost gone. She was fevered and the

pain in her limbs was great. She longed to sleep ; but there was still much to do. She was beginning to be afraid that her strength would not last through the crisis. If once the difficulties of the next few days were overcome, she could live and at last she could enjoy the fulfilment of the promise of life. Very little more remained to do ; a soothing of a difficulty here, the removal of an obstacle there . . . but she was very tired.

She went to her closet that evening, the room where she and George had sat together during his last illness. The trees in the garden were heavy and green, the air was oppressive ; across the field came the chimes of the clock on Kensington village church, striking the quarters. Anne summoned a page and bade him bring her some black sweet cherries. She ate them thoughtfully as he held up the bowl, kneeling on one knee. The boy had a lock of hair awry ; she shook her head at him and smoothed it gently. But she did not speak.

There was to be a Council at nine. The new Lord Treasurer would have to be appointed. It would be Bolingbroke. It would have to be Bolingbroke. Anne saw him in her mind's eye, tall, careless, handsome, his beautiful fingers curled about the staff of office, smiling down at her, perfectly polite, perfectly indifferent.

For one moment the fever drew away from her. For a moment she looked down upon herself as from above, and saw the truth.

It was after all a dream, this hope of security, this belief in the fulfilment of her hopes. Bolingbroke had her in his hands ; his plans were made ; the very army was commanded by a Jacobite, Ormonde. Bolingbroke would rule the Commons, he had the Lords at his heels (had she not created twelve Tory peers to make

a majority for the peace he had engineered?). He had statesmanship, cunning, learning, eloquence. No one could withstand him. It was by his design that she had, though unknowingly, dismissed Oxford. That Schism Bill of his, over which she had rejoiced since it strengthened the beloved Church—how could she have imagined that he had created such a measure for the Church's sake—he, a libertine, a free thinker? It was simply a means to divide the House against Oxford.

Never, never would she rule her people. She had lost her way. She had wandered in a maze of self-deception, always in the hope of attaining kingliness; but all the while these men, so much cleverer than herself, had taken the glory which belonged only to kings and had been ruling England unknown to her. They had watched her wandering, they knew she could never come to kingship. Though she rid herself of every enemy, though she spoke clear and loud at the Council and declared herself before the Parliaments, still she would never sway them. There were men who knew secret ways, who understood the art of government. These steered the ship—she was only their passenger.

A secret was lost. Some magic which her uncle had known, her father had understood, of which even Dutch William had partaken, had not descended to her. The magic was lost to kings; dissipated among a multitude of men. Hanover might come, or Stuart, but the race of kings had died.

She saw herself there, a small, stout figure, an old woman among a group of courteous, indifferent gentlemen, who held up their business till she had withdrawn from their company. She saw herself as they

saw her—an interruption. They were waiting for something ; they were waiting for her death.

She had lived all her life for the fulfilment of a promise which, after all, had never been made to her. She did not feel unhappy, only very tired. Some discomfort was gone from her mind ; some load she had carried many years. She had no longer a grudge against the world, for the world had not broken any contract with her, it seemed. And now she was no longer afraid.

It was growing dark ; there was the sound of voices outside in the hall, of feet tramping upstairs, of men talking to each other as they went up, in twos and threes. A servant came in, lit the candles and drew the heavy curtains with a jangle across the windows. The air turned yellow from dusky brown.

“The Council waits your presence, your Majesty,” said a page at the door. Leaning on his arm, Anne went slowly up the stairs.

Those who waited outside the Council room heard the voices rise and fall without ceasing as midnight passed and the chimes of Kensington struck twelve, and one, and then half-past one.

“The Jacks are not having it all their own way,” yawned an attendant to the sentry pacing up and down the corridor. “But the Queen is silent. She’s letting them rage on as they like. I haven’t heard her voice the whole evening. God pity her.”

Two o’clock struck. There was a noise of chairs overturning and the voices in the room were raised louder. Then the doors were flung open. “Quick,” cried someone within, “lights and a chair. Her Majesty has swooned !”

Anne struggled out of bed the next day and attended

another Council. Again she collapsed, again the meeting was adjourned till the following day. That evening she rose and dressed ; her fever was raging and she was in pain. She must go to the Council, she knew that that was the duty of the Queen. She must do whatever she could. If only they did not quarrel so ! She was very tired and loud voices were intolerable to her. She was afraid she might cry at the Council table because she was so tired. It was difficult to attend the meeting, but she must because it was her duty. She staggered out of her room to the presence chamber where stood the huge gold clock. It ticked very deliberately. It would soon be time for the meeting. Anne stood and watched the hands move. She was so tired she could do nothing except stand there and watch the hands move.

Someone spoke to her, "Does your Majesty see anything unusual in the clock ?" Anne turned her head slowly. The speaker was Mrs. Dansey. She could think of nothing. She could only look at the old woman, quite silently. Mrs. Dansey shrieked. Attendants rushed in. Anne stood quite still. "Come, your Majesty," said one of them gently, and led her away.

They bled her the next morning and her thoughts for a while moved in natural succession. She tried to rise at eight, but had to go back to bed. She was disturbed by a noise outside. "What was that ?" she asked. A lady answered, "It is Lady Masham, Madam, who has swooned from grief and exhaustion." Anne thought, "Poor, good Masham," and then ceased to think for a time because of the pain that seized her head.

Again they bled her, and a few hours later she was

so far recovered that she received Bolingbroke. He was come to receive the staff, she supposed. The sight of his face brought back her full remembrance. But his message was different. The Privy Councillors were of the opinion that it would be for the public service if Lord Shrewsbury were made Lord High Treasurer.

Something must have happened after she had left the Councils. So they had broken Bolingbroke after all. They had overturned his Jacobites. Another skilled sailor had been appointed to steer the ship.

"He will not take office till he receives the staff from your hands," said Bolingbroke. Anne nodded.

Shrewsbury came in softly. She had always liked him; he had old blood in his veins. She was glad the people were to be guided by him for a little while.

He came to the bedside. "Does your Majesty know to whom you give the wand?" he asked gently, intently.

"Yes," answered Anne, smiling very faintly, "to the Duke of Shrewsbury." She held the wand towards him. "For God's sake," she said, "use it for the good of my people."

After that, for the most part, she dreamt uncertain dreams. But in the intervals when she awoke she mourned a little to herself because of her great loneliness. Only a Stuart could understand this desolation of loneliness; others of those blessed ones who had been chosen by the Lord. Now when she was overwhelmed by this weariness and pain she longed very greatly for one of her own kind. But there was only one left and he was far away. "My brother, my brother," murmured the Queen, and her attendants pressed closer about the bed where she lay quite still.

She did not see them. She saw James Stuart, so fair of skin, fair of hair, so young and beautiful, wandering about strange countries, a king without a land. She had put a price on her brother's head. "My brother, what will become of you?" cried the Queen.

She knew he could not come to her. The Stuarts had ever been separated one from another. They loved while they hated, and they left each other to die in lonely places.

She was not afraid, but she was very lonely.

On Sunday morning August 10th, 1714, between seven and eight o'clock, Queen Anne Stuart died in her bedroom at her Palace of Kensington.

THE END

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